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THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

1920.

LONDON: JOHN MURRAY, 50A ALBEMARLE STREET, W. 1.

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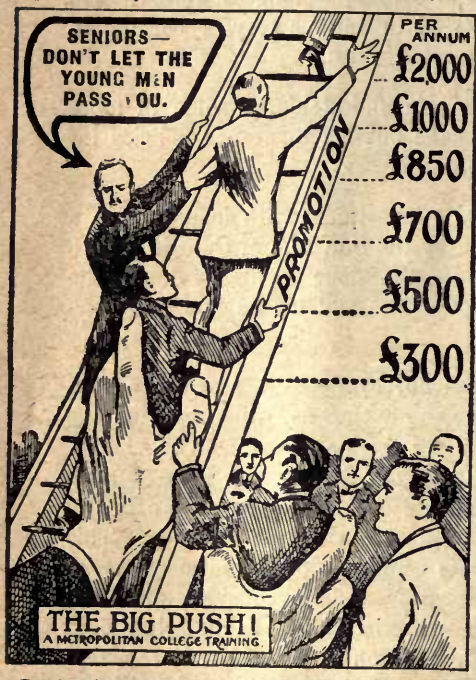

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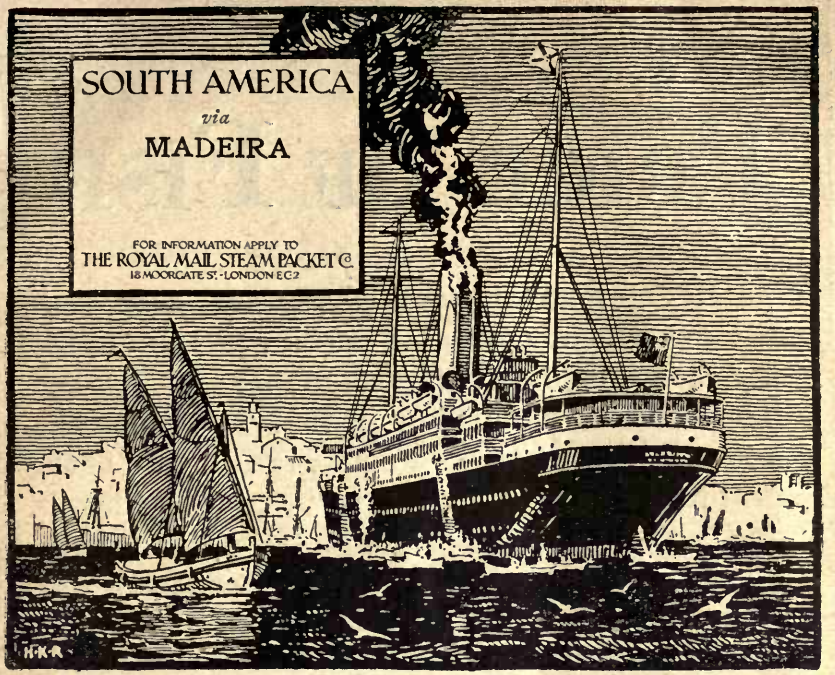

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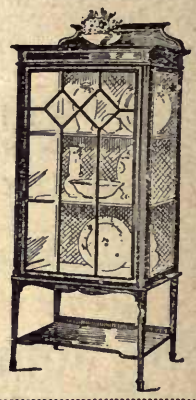

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APRIL 1920

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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

APRIL 1920.

THE FOURTH DIMENSION.

BY HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

CHAPTER IV.

ENTER CUPID.

I.

JESS caught a glimpse of her face in the brilliantly-lighted looking-glass before she left the dressing-room. Anything more comically solemn could hardly be conceived. She was feeling abject, trembling with apprehension that she might 'dry up,' that the first words would never leave her quivering lips. And this was the exact expression wanted, the expression which, so far, she had sought in vain. And, instantly, she realised that her luck still held. Could she keep that expression?

The audience would be prepared for it. At The Castle, Cherrington had noticed that Giggles's entrance had not even provoked a smile. The staid, stodgy county people had missed a point not adequately sharpened. Cherry, at Manchester, introduced a line that made all the difference. Before she appeared, her stage mother said: 'Where's Giggles?' and Saucy Sal, in the latest version, exclaimed loudly: 'Giggles . . .? I ain't never seen her smile yet. Peelin' taters, she is.' Upon this Giggles is summoned.

Jess reached the stage, and took up her position, waiting for her cue. She had to appear before her mother, only to be dismissed. She was 'on' for less than a minute with one line to say.

'Giggles . . .'

Jess went on. Had she kept the right expression, the queer combination of misery and solemnity? She emerged from the scullery, facing the audience, standing still, vacantly staring.

A roar of laughter greeted her.

Cherrington, standing back in his box, ravaged by anxiety, feeling his heart thumping against his shirt front, forgot everything except Jess's face. He, too, roared with laughter. She was—IT. How had she done it—the little rogue? Had she dared, in defiance of authority, to keep this amazing expression back, to hide it? He could hardly believe it. His swift wits leapt to a more reasonable explanation, but not, as we know, the true one. Jess had the supreme gift, so rare. She became Giggles. For the moment it was impossible to think of her as Jess.

The laughter died down. Giggles was invited to 'hop it.' How would she deliver her line? Cherry could see people in the stalls leaning forward to catch her first words. They came drawlingly, stolidly, and, best of all, with clearest articulation:

'You ain't Gawd.'

The audience laughed louder than before. Pellie, quite as solemn as Giggles, said to Cherry:

'She's got 'em—she's got 'em. Will she hold her laugh?'

Giggles stood on one leg, scratching herself with the other.

'Yus, I am,' said Miss Oldacre. 'You 'op it.'

Giggles gulped, and seemed to shrink. The big house, from pit to gallery, was bubbling with amusement. At rehearsals, Jess had turned and disappeared into the scullery. But her amazing reception put to flight careful instructions. Appetite for laughs becomes inordinate with the oldest stagers. Imagine the craving and measure it, if you can, with beginners. Staring at her mother, pop-eyed and open-mouthed, Jess hopped backwards into the scullery and vanished amid tumultuous cheers and laughter.

Safely 'off,' she nearly fainted. Muds, however, ministered to her. Out of a capacious pocket, she fished up a flask.

'Take one little whack,' she whispered.

Jess obeyed and choked, but impending collapse was averted. Muds said emphatically, in a whisper that seemed to Jess loud as the crack of doom:

'You've made a big hit, dear. And I know.'

The stage hands, the leading man and lady waiting for their cue, smiled pleasantly. Muds went on whispering:

'You're quite all right now, ain't you? Come over queer, and no wonder. Oh! don't I know the feelin'. . .!'

Soon, she would be on again. To appear when she wasn't wanted, to be rebuked, and then to disappear, was exacted of Giggles in the first act. The difficulty, as Crewe pointed out, lay in

varying gestures and inflections. But she had one short scene with the leading lady, a high-born dame, in which she had to answer the ill-considered questions which the wife of Dives so often puts to the daughter of Lazarus.

How would she emerge from this ordeal? In its way the little scene was extremely funny, and a sort of competition for laughs between the two actresses. Jess, as Cherry knew, possessed a very lively sense of humour, which would wreck the scene if it peeped out of Giggles. At The Castle, this scene had missed fire. Cherry, very disconsolate, had proposed cutting it, but, fortunately, both Crewe and Pellie objected.

At Manchester it went gloriously. What Crewe had foreseen came home to the author. Jess had the best part, from an actor's point of view, in the comedy. A really skilful and experienced dramatist would have built his play round this delightfully stolid personality. Why hadn't he done it?

There were many calls after the first act, and Cherry rushed up to the dressing-room. Muds appeared at the door.

'Oh, it's you, Mr. Cherrington. I suppose you *must* come in. Florrie, put a shawl over your shoulders, child!'

Cherry entered to find Florrie in camisole and petticoat, munching chocolates. Jess was putting on a pair of stockings with many holes in them, and, from an ordinary mother's point of propriety, not fit to be seen by a young and excitable man. Seeing Cherry, she covered herself with confusion, no shawl being provided for her.

'You're two darlings!' said Cherry fervently. 'I could hug both of you.'

'None o' that,' said Muds.

'I don't mind,' giggled Florrie.

Cherry, however, restrained himself, but not in speech. The house was very favourable. Pummy was satisfied. The two acts to follow were admittedly better than the first. If Crewe had been present, he would be ready to sign the contract for the London production. Pummy would wire him after the last curtain.

All this was interlarded with little compliments to both the girls, beaming smiles, and the reiterated injunction—'Keep it up.'

Finally, Muds pushed him from the room. And, immediately, the irrepressible Florrie attacked Jess.

'Hug me? He was crazy to hug you. And you sat there blinkin' at him.'

'If my mother could have seen me . . .!'

'Bashful little puss,' continued Florrie. 'Well, he saw more of us than he ever saw before—and what of it? I ain't ashamed o' what God has given me. I wish *my* boy had been here.'

Jess grasped an opportunity.

'Which boy, Florrie?'

There were photographs of half a dozen boys on Miss Osborne's dressing-table. Florrie considered the question seriously, saying, in a sentimental tone:

'Really and truly, I think I like Harry best.'

Harry, in the eyes of Jess, was the least attractive of Florrie's admirers. She wondered why he had evoked sentiment from this hardened little flirt, and said so.

'Harry ain't a window-dresser. See? No talker, neither. And so respectable.'

Muds sighed.

'I think the world and all of that,' she observed.

The voice of the call-girl echoed shrilly along the passage.

'Second act.'

II.

The second act held drama, and accordingly went well. Pellie rubbed his hands, saying to Cherry:

'Tension, my boy, tension. Nothing like it. It isn't comedy that makes a play. Your story is being capitally told. I saw one young woman in the dress circle mopping her eyes with a brand new pair of white gloves. Tears and laughter—tears and laughter.'

In the interval, Cherry was interviewed. The pressman shook hands:

'Congrats, Mr. Cherrington. Manchester, let me tell you, sir, is not lightly moved. We're critical down here, and proud of it. If your third act holds 'em, I'll offer you a thousand pounds for a one-third interest in your fees, film rights included.'

Cherry was reasonably certain that the speaker would be hard put to it to find a thousand pence, but he didn't say so. Modestly, he accepted the congratulations.

'What, sir, does it feel like to be a successful dramatist?'

'I'm not that, yet.'

'You will be to-morrow. I stake my reputation on it. Can you give me any information about the young lady who plays Giggles?'

'This is her first appearance as a professional.'

'And not her last. She has made friends with Manchester. I should like her photograph and yours, sir, for our Sunday edition.'

Cherry laughed.

'If the third act goes better than the second, you shall have them.'

The third act satisfied the expectation aroused by the second. And when Jess smiled, revealing her dimples and her pretty teeth, the gallery howled with delight. Owbridge, after many calls, insisted that she should take one call alone. Cherry pushed her on, whispering: 'Smile—smile, for all you're worth!' But for the moment she couldn't. She faced the audience solemnly. But as the house rose at her, she smiled artlessly, like a happy child. A voice from the pit floated to her:

'Carn't yer giggle, lass?'

Jess giggled.

There were more calls before the author was summoned. He couldn't complain of his reception. The crowd loves youth, and Cherry looked absurdly young and happy. A speech was demanded, but Cherry shook his head, and bowed. A memorable *première* was over.

The generous Pellie provided champagne and oysters in the parlour. Every incident in the performance was gone over. Miss Oldacre said with finality:

'Jess put us to bed.'

'If you say that, I shall put myself to bed.'

'Bed . . . ! We're going to make a night of it.'

Pumford joined them, after his arduous labours with the gentlemen of the Press. He promised favourable notices and predicted good business. He had sent a heartening wire to Sir Felix. The only shadow cast upon the supper party fell when he revealed the truth. Indisposition had kept Sir Felix in his London house.

'Is Sir Felix ill?' Jess asked.

'Indisposed,' replied the cautious Pummy.

The little man drank a glass of champagne and departed.

With him vanished the shadow. To Jess, the night seemed glorious day. She had to pinch herself to make sure that she was awake and not dreaming. And yet, behind her triumph, percolating through it, was the memory of Cherry's kiss. Since that, they had not been alone together. But she was conscious of a change in him and in herself. The kiss, somehow, had awakened her. Even now, she was not certain that it was a lover's kiss. Kissing was taken for what it might be worth—in stageland. Indeed, after the

show, when all the performers stood upon the stage with the curtain down, Florrie had kissed the author, who accepted the salute as if on parade.

Again and again, during supper, her eyes met the eyes of Cherry. It almost seemed to Jess that he looked at her with the pride and joyousness of possession. His eyes said plainly: 'You are my beloved Giggles.' Of course they might be saying: 'You are my beloved Jess.' For the first time, she envisaged her dual personality as actress and woman. But somehow instinct told her that the perplexing problem would be solved before this wonderful night was over. He would see her alone, and then she would know.

Meanwhile the others talked shop with increasing energy and enthusiasm. Crewe had let his theatre for six months. Probably, he would present Cherry's play in September. Unfortunately, there was no part in it for him, and, if he recovered health and energy, he might wish to play again after so long a rest. His public would expect that. To find another theatre would be very difficult and expensive. Both Cherrington and Pell raised excited voices against this scarcity of theatres, a scarcity caused by the inordinate demand for revue and musical comedy. They rent in twain managers who produced Yankee plays with nothing in them but 'punch.' They fell tooth and nail upon others who relied on pruriency and pathology to fill their stalls with neurotic women. Miss Oldacre calmed them. Jess thought how sensible she was, how broad-minded, how sweetly reasonable.

'I have no patience with you two—none. It is for the public to decide what they want. As for brains, it takes the best to make a success of anything. I have never played in revue or musical comedy. I have never been "featured" in films. But I make my curtsey to all the clever, amusing people who shine in places where I should certainly fizzle out. As for you, Pellie, you are old enough to know better. You had my photograph under your pillow when I played hardly anything but Shakespeare. And you bestowed the same honour upon Kate Vaughan and Nellie Farren. You were wiser then than you are now.'

She smiled so graciously that Pellie relit his cigar which had gone out. Cherry rose solemnly, captured her hand, and kissed it.

'If Miss Oldacre lives, we will let live.'

He is good-tempered,' thought Jess.

III.

When Jess announced her positive determination to go to bed, Cherry got up with her, and accompanied her into the passage. Jess had not far to go, for Miss Oldacre's bedroom was next to the parlour, and Jess had the room beyond the intervening bathroom. She had merely to walk a few steps down the main corridor and turn sharp to the right along a small passage. When they reached the passage, Jess held out her hand.

Cherry saw a window at the end of the passage, and through it that 'orbed maiden,' the Moon. Under the window was a window seat.

'Come,' he whispered.

'It's so late.'

He took her hand and led her to the window-seat.

'Look at me, dear Jess.'

She raised her eyes to his, faintly smiling. His laughing face had become very serious.

'Were you angry when I kissed you?'

'N-no.'

'What did you think about it?'

'I thought nothing . . . . much. The dresser said you were quite the gentleman. Under the circumstances it was, perhaps, a gentlemanly kiss. Did any grease-paint come off?'

He ignored this. Under his persistent glance, she became slightly nervous. A lover was revealing himself umistakably.

'Jess, you are still a mystery to me,' his voice thrilled. 'Perhaps, I am a mystery to you. But to-night, this wonderful night, I want to be crystal clear. How could I speak before to-night?—and even now we don't know what to-morrow may hold.'

Her eyes became troubled. She was moved. George had never really thrilled her. Was this love, blinded love, stealing upon her a-tip-toe, filching from her peace of mind and body?

He went on very softly, close to her, but not too close:

'To-morrow might hold so much—so much for you and me. I have thought of that to-morrow from the first. Do you remember when I said: "So, you're Giggles," and your quaint answer: "Yes, my lord?" You captured me then, little Jess.'

'Cherry . . .'

'Yes?'

'You are making love to me, aren't you?'

'Of course I am. And it frightens you.'

'It does. Cherry, I am ever so fond of you. But—don't touch me! Are we our true selves to-night? I—I don't know. We seem to have come together in a sense that I can't yet understand. I have looked upon it as a delightful partnership. We have worked hard. I believe, I know, that I have been happy with you—happier, perhaps, than I have ever been. How dear your friendship is to me I can measure. But love . . .'

'Love is immeasurable, Jess.'

She whispered, almost inaudibly:

'I want to love you, if I can. Because of that, be patient with me.'

Her sincerity, her consideration for him, were so obvious that he sprang up, alert to meet her wishes, aflame to prove his devotion.

'Good night, you darling.'

She sat alone in the moonlight.

IV.

Jess read the notices of the play, next morning, in bed. Taken as a whole they were favourable, although the *Manchester Trustee* was slightly patronising. . . .

'The author, Mr. Arthur Cherrington, is a young man, and this is his first serious contribution to contemporary drama. We wish, therefore, to deal with him tenderly. His work shows great promise, but, as yet, it is, technically speaking, very uneven. He has much to learn about construction and more still about what we may term dramatic economy. We marked many superfluous lines, introduced designedly to provoke the easy laugh. In this comedy there is an excess of exposition. But the author has a sense of the stage and a freshness of outlook which we can commend heartily. Let him beware, however, of concentrating too much upon merely stage effects and devices, whether they be fresh or stale. There is no school for dramatists or novelists other than life, the life beyond the footlights and independent of them. We would urge Mr. Cherrington to study life at first hand, and to suck from that teeming source the true inspiration. We imagine that he has studied rather the work of other dramatists. To use an expression of the hunting-field, he has been speaking to a heel scent. . . . Of the company, who worked together admirably, we can say many pleasant things. . . . Last, but assuredly not least, we come to the delightful *Giggles*. She is a real creation, happily conceived and

happily presented. We should have liked much more of her. Miss Jessica Yeo is, we understand a beginner. She should go far, because her work gives evidence of sincerity and intelligence. We congratulate her *con amore*. . . .'

Jess, smiling inwardly and outwardly, took her nail-scissors and cut out this notice to send to her mother. None of the Yeos had travelled to Manchester, and Jess well understood the underlying reason of this. Mrs. Yeo and her eldest son would have 'assisted,' had they not apprehended disaster. What effect her success would have, she was, as yet, unable to determine. The fry would 'buck' about it in Sloden-Pauncefort. The Olympians would preserve a dignified and discreet silence. One swallow could hardly be expected to turn the winter of their discontent into summer.

Hardly had Jess read the other notices, when Miss Oldacre came in and kissed her. The great actress, looking younger than ever in a wonderful rose-coloured silk dressing-gown, sat down upon the foot of the bed.

'I wish you were my daughter,' she said.

With such speeches Nan Oldacre sweetened many hearts. Dare we indict her sincerity? Fortunately, there is no necessity to raise such an ungracious question. Always, she conveyed a sense of sincerity. Kind words flew from a kind heart. She continued:

'You deserved your triumph, Jess. And I rejoice in it, but . . .'

'But?'

'I did not sleep very well last night. I never can sleep after these excitements. I like to lie still, cosily snuggling up against warm memories, spreading my hands above the glowing embers. But I want to talk about you, not myself, partly because you have carried me back to my own youth—still near to me although really so far away. Tell me, if you can, how you feel about the stage? What does this first success mean to you?'

Jess hesitated. She had not yet marshalled her thoughts. Her brain was still buzzing. She could hear the cheers and laughter of the audience.

'I—I don't know.'

'How could you? But I have been through this; and I am an old woman who forgets her lines now, who can only accept little parts, but who never forgets the earlier chapters of her life. I belong to a family of actors. I am very proud of that. You don't. From what you have told me, your people have a prejudice against

the stage. It is quite likely that if you win your way to heights you will lose them, and with them what may be called the amenities of a simple happy life.'

'I understand, Miss Oldacre. It's sweet of you to talk to me like this. If you will go on a little, I may be able to see things more clearly. Are you warning me against the stage? The Duke of Sloden, I think, meant to do so, but he didn't know how. He—he funked it. Because he funked it, I was oddly impressed.'

'Ah! The Duke of Sloden? A kindly man, with intuitions. Naturally, he doesn't know what I know.' She paused for a moment, faintly smiling, obviously selecting her words. She continued slowly: 'The stage is an obsession, Jess. Why it should be more so than any other profession, I cannot say. Possibly, because it is a counterfeit presentment of life, touching life at all its edges, and so seldom getting beyond them. Anyway, the constant practice of my profession exacts immense sacrifices. Some of us reach a point when we always act, when we are actually conscious of acting. Some famous actors don't encourage their children to go on the stage. Why? Because they realise this artificiality from which so few escape. It always amuses me to walk down Piccadilly with Charles Fanshawe. He is absurdly self-conscious of the crowd, carrying a pair of ears cocked for the expected whisper: "That's Fanshawe." If he is passed by with indifference, he winces. An actress, even more famous, habitually arrives late—even for breakfast. She prefers a good entrance to hot bacon. She has made the most elaborate arrangements for her funeral, so that the last exit may be worthy of her. And I . . .' She laughed and touched her gown. 'Well, I discarded my dear old wrapper and put on this, because I wanted to dress the unsympathetic part of nurse.'

'You couldn't be unsympathetic.'

'Thanks. To return to you—are you prepared for sacrifices?'

'What sacrifices?'

'Almost everything unconnected with the stage.'

'Pellie called that the fourth dimension.'

'So it is. Life is a simpler word.'

'But surely, Miss Oldacre, an actress does not cut herself off from life and—and love?'

'Life and love? Life is love, and love is life. No; in one sense we don't cut ourselves off from life and love, but we imperil gravely our full realisation of them. The stage tears husband from wife, mother from children. Suppose you were married, with two

tinies to whom you had given life, and who exacted in return love, and suppose you had signed on for an American tour—what then ? '

' Yes—I see.'

' Make no mistake about one thing. An actress must take her call. She must follow her line of destiny, wherever it leads. The dear public must never be disappointed. We have to play when often we should be in bed. And a great part leaves us limp, bloodless, as if some vampire had sucked all energy from us. What is left is given to friends, husband, children. It isn't much, Jess. And then, perhaps, the friends slide from us, the husband leaves us, the children love their nurses. Ah ! you will say that we find others, but it's not the same thing, it never can be the same thing. We touch the hem of life, and no virtue comes out of it.'

Her soft voice was infinitely sad. And such words coming spontaneously from such a woman, so gracious, so full of love of life, so optimistic, made a deep impression.

' I shall remember,' said Jess.

Miss Oldacre's voice became gay.

' There—it's off my chest. Are you pleased with your notices ? '

V.

At one, Cherrington took Jess out to luncheon. From his manner nobody could have guessed that he was in love. During luncheon he talked of the play and the press notices. Jess had expected from him a querulous note, but, much to her astonishment, he seemed to attach more importance to the censure than the praise.

' That fellow who did the notice in the *Trustee* is dead right. I must suck inspiration from life. I shall scrap my collection of plays. I want to soak myself in life. I wish I knew more about primitive people and new countries. What fun, what experiences we should have, if we could cut loose from civilisation for a year ! '

' The Lure of the Wild.'

' That sort of thing would bore you, Jess ? '

He spoke interrogatively. As she remained silent, he continued in the same tone :

' You have tasted blood ; you will want more of it. And, by the way, you will get more of it. I saw Pummy this morning. He is filling up dates. You will be on the road for many months.'

' And where will you be ? '

'That depends entirely upon a young person who insists that I should be patient. For the moment, you are self-sufficing.'

'Am I?'

'You must be. To-night you will count your laughs as Florrie does. That is the beginning of the end.'

'What end?'

'The West End. Your ultimate destination.'

She regarded him intently.

'Do you want me to get there—ultimately?'

He evaded the question.

'I want you to get what you want; and you will, if you want it hard enough. The want to will and the will to want. It's all in that.'

'And what do you want, Cherry?'

'You,' he answered fervently.

No lover could have answered more promptly, with such decision. And his eyes met hers hungrily. Yes; she liked him better than she had ever liked George. And he was of finer clay. More, he had an understanding of women, so rare in young men. Her voice was not under perfect control as she went on:

'I believe that. But . . . if you had to choose between me and your work . . . ? You have told me a great deal about your work. I know what it means to you. I remember what you said about journalism. You had reached a point—hadn't you?—when a fair income as a journalist was a certainty, if you stuck tight to journalism.'

'Yes. Go on.'

'You told me that you had sacrificed some of this income when you seriously took up writing for the stage.'

'No regrets there. I looked upon journalism as a means to an end.'

'Well, suppose some fairy godmother offered you a choice between journalism and me, and a huge dramatic success without me?'

He frowned slightly. Possibly her quiet tones misled him. He knew that some women—his own mother, for example—set an immense value on an assured income. For her sake, his father had renounced speculation and with it the possibility of making a large fortune. To give his wife peace of mind, Cherrington *père* had stuck to the safe ruts of an old-fashioned broker. Mrs. Yeo, of course, from the little he had seen of her, impressed him as just such another. The Cedars sufficed her. These thoughts flitted in

and out of his mind, perplexing him horribly. He answered with a shade of irritability :

'Bother your fairy godmother ! To me, you are part—far and away the greatest part—of my ambitions. I want a big success to share with you. Mere comfort doesn't appeal to me. Comfort means compromise. It's playing pat-ball with life. I hate pat-ball. I want you desperately. I tried to suppress that, to hide it from you, till there was something to offer, but last night swept me off my feet. You are ambitious. I know it. There is the same driving power in you that's in me. You wouldn't be satisfied as the wife of a journalist. Let's go for the big things—together, partners through thick and thin. I'll say this, and swear to it—I'd sooner fail in the big things with you than win the world without you.'

She replied shyly :

'I wanted to hear you say that. And if—if you had sworn that you would take just comfort and me, I should not have believed you. Now—be patient a little longer.'

They lingered over the pleasant little meal, talking once more as pals. Pummy, so Cherry informed Jess, had prepared a contract for the London production. Neither Sir Felix nor Cherry had signed it.

'Pummy is a rare pincher. He wants the American rights, film rights, amateur rights—everything. I shall get my royalties, and it saves me a lot of trouble. We are booked up well for to-night. That's wonderful. A second night is generally a frost, and the house full of paper. It's in the air that our show's a winner. All the same, towns vary tremendously. What goes in Manchester may be snowed in in Newcastle. However, we shall have a run. The beggars in some of the big towns wouldn't book a date till we made good here. And business is booming in the provinces. The small towns are full of money. But our cast is not a cheap one.'

Jess told him of her interview with Pumford. Cherry laughed.

'I wondered how you had got at him. Really, that offer to reduce your screw captured him. He speaks of you solemnly as—straight. He's your friend. Clever little witch you are . . . ! Shall we look at some pictures ? '

They did so. To Jess this was a test. She hated to look at pictures, or to listen to music, with her own people. And, long ago, the discovery that her tastes in everything connected with art differed from the Yeo standards had been very disconcerting. To her delight, Cherry lingered before the pictures which appealed to her ; he seemed to look at them with her eyes, to feel, as she

did, certain effects of light and colour. He talked volubly about vibrations, about the harmonious relation between colour and sound and form, particularly form.

'If you sprinkle a metal disc with powdered chalk, attach a tuning-fork to it, and draw the bow of a violin across the fork, you get an amazing pattern, which never varies till you change the note. Do you know that the vibrations which produce the low G, for instance, will give you the ultra violet ray if you multiply them enough? I'd like to go into that. To me, nine times out of ten, in a big spectacular show, the colours of the costumes seem to bark at the music and the words. Those things could be co-ordinated scientifically. Most of our stage settings are wrong. Barker is moving in the right direction; so is Craig, although I can't keep step with him.'

'You always return to the stage, Cherry.'

'So I do. Does that bore you?'

'No; but I don't want to be entirely obsessed by it.'

She repeated, almost verbatim, what Miss Oldacre had said, with a comment of her own.

'She was warning me.'

'Um! She didn't set forth the attractive side. Take her own life. She has had an astounding innings, not over yet. She knows everybody. At a time when she might be crouching over a fire knitting stockings for her grandchildren, she is a world-wide favourite, an immense influence, an arc-light. You can't have it both ways. If you're the old-fashioned sort of girl, if you're afraid of storm and stress, why, then, chuck the stage. You can't step gingerly on to it, picking your way, lifting your skirts, shrinking from dust and dirt. You must carry a high head, prance on, push your way to the front, hold your own the more firmly because you have had to fight for it.'

'Yes, yes; I feel like that.'

'Of course you do. Confound these craners at fences! I have no use for them, male or female.'

His firm chin protruded; his blue eyes flashed. Jess, watching him critically, thought to herself: 'He can't fail; and I, perhaps, can help him. He has chosen me as a helpmeet. I shall love helping him. But why can't I fling my arms round his neck and tell him so?'

Presently, he began to talk of Florrie, praising her performance till Jess winced under the first tiny stab of jealousy. Florrie, of

course, was a type, with grease-paint in her marrow. She could play low comedy with a raciness and humour hard to beat. But Florrie, being a common little thing, could never soar above such parts as Saucy Sal; never earn more than the salary that was paid for such parts. She was an honest worker, a credit to the 'profesh.' From Florrie, Cherry passed swiftly to the leading man and leading lady. They, too, were types, provincial favourites, unable to tickle town palates, suburban rather than urban. . . .

The time passed quickly. It was almost five when they returned to the hotel.

VI.

Cherry left Jess in the hall. She was crossing to the lift, when the page-boy approached her with a pert grin upon his round face.

'A military gentleman to see you, miss. He's in the drorin' room, and he's ordered tea for two.'

Jess had left word in the office that she would be back for tea.

What name?'

'Capting Apperton.'

Instantly, she experienced an odd shock. The presence of George disconcerted her. He would bring with him Sloden-Pauncefort, that Arcadian atmosphere, softly sensuous in its way, which seemed so remote from Manchester. But how friendly and jolly of him to come! Quite possibly, he had read a paragraph in a London paper. He wanted to share her small triumph.

She found him in the drawing-room, very voluble.

'You dear old Jess. I wanted to weigh in last night, but my colonel is a heartless beast. How are things going?'

'Don't you know?'

'How could I? I only arrived about twenty minutes ago.'

She laughed at him.

'Are all the papers in Manchester sold out?'

'By Jove! Never thought of that. I suppose you worried through, eh?'

'Oh yes; but I nearly died of funk.'

'I'm coming to your show to-night. I ought to be given a free seat, because I shall be worth a tenner to the box-office. I'm prepared to shout myself hoarse.'

They sat down. Jess took from her bag the press-cutting not yet dispatched to Sloden-Pauncefort. George read it agape with

surprise. Jess could see that she had suddenly expanded in his eyes. Awe informed his genial voice.

'I never expected this.'

'I'm sure you didn't.'

'This'll make 'em sit up and howl at The Cedars.'

For five minutes, till tea appeared, he could talk of nothing else. Quite unconsciously, he presented for the inspection of Jess a queerly distorted image of herself as she appeared to him before her triumph. And she recognised a portrait which Sloden-Pauncefort would pronounce to be an excellent likeness. George added one ludicrous touch after another, till she stopped him with a protest.

'What a fool you thought me!'

He denied this emphatically.

'Nothing of the sort.' His tone became sentimental. 'You know jolly well that I look upon you as my best pal. Am I the sort of cove to take up with a fool?'

Jess replied slyly:

'More unlikely things have happened.'

George accepted this seriously. He bent forward, whispering:

'That was a blow over the heart, Jess.'

'Heavens! What do you mean?'

'Irene Seaton has chucked me. I took up with her, as you know. And she *is* a fool. But I never thought of her as a pal.'

Jess assimilated this quickly.

'George, dear, do you call her a fool because she has chucked you?'

He acknowledged this thrust with a laugh. Jess decided that the 'chucking' had not caused lacerations other than those inflicted upon a youthful officer's self-esteem. Details were forthcoming. The young lady was engaged to be married to an actor. A mummer, not in the first flight, had been preferred to the hussar. And the heavens had not fallen . . .! George, it soon transpired, had offered his hand and fortunes, present and prospective, under conditions. The regiment would go to India when Peace was definitely signed. Miss Irene Seaton was invited to sail with it, dropping for ever, as a star, from the theatrical firmament. Jess dared not laugh.

'Did you expect her to jump into your arms?'

'If you could see the bounder she has chosen . . .!'

'Perhaps I shall.'

He raised his eyebrows.

'I mean, if I play in London.'

'But, hang it, you're not going on with this?'

'Why not?'

He became explosive. The stage was no fit place for Miss Jessica Yeo. Look at Irene! Look at her . . .! Captain Apperton hazarded the conjecture that Miss Yeo might marry a mummer. Jess listened, amused and edified. Apparently, the hussar regarded all mummers as rogues and vagabonds. This was the first effect of the 'chucking.' Jess, he went on, had come to Manchester for a lark.

'I haven't got the "bird,"' murmured Jess, using an expression of Florrie's.

'You wanted excitements. That's all right. Quite all right up to a point. If I were foot-loose, I'd join you.'

'We should add a few laughs, and every laugh is worth five pounds to the box-office.'

'I tell you I shouldn't mind doing the provinces with you. But London . . .!'

'Be perfectly calm. A London contract has been drawn up by Sir Felix Crewe's business manager. It isn't signed, but I have every reason to believe it will be. If you doubt me, you can ask Mr. Cherrington.'

'Who's Mr. Cherrington?'

'The author.'

George asked for another cup of tea, and glanced at his watch.

'I must order a nice little dinner. You'll dine with me, eh?'

'No, you must dine with us. Miss Oldacre may sweeten your opinion of mummers.'

'Miss Oldacre? She isn't playing in Manchester?'

'Indeed, she is—in our company. What a profound interest you have taken in our show!'

George looked slightly aggrieved, but his tone became sentimental again.

'I travelled from Canterbury to see you, old thing. Honestly, I thought you might need a bit of bucking up. This success of yours is a knock-out. But I'm jolly proud of you. And, of course, it's a great honour to meet Miss Oldacre.'

VII.

At dinner, rather a hurried meal and horribly early, George made an excellent impression. He was accepted as the pal of Jess, an old friend. Instinct, however, whispered to Jess that George might become the lover again at a moment's notice. Secretly, she was delighted with his manners and deportment. In Miss Oldacre's presence, 'swank' was impossible. George was lured on to talk of the Retreat from Mons, and his modest recital provoked in Jess the reflection—why is he so self-assured about things that he doesn't understand? George never 'bucked' about his horsemanship, and blushed when it happened to be praised.

He remained with Pell and Cherrington to smoke a cigar after Jess and Miss Oldacre left for the theatre. In the taxi, Jess had to answer questions:

'Why don't you encourage this nice boy?'

'He doesn't need encouragement.'

'So much the better. I have no patience with shy men. Tell me all about him and his people.'

Jess did so. She liked all the Appertons; and she loved the old manor.

'You come round a corner, and suddenly see the house across the lawns, through some great elms on each side. I used to dream of it as the home of the Sleeping Beauty. It's full of Tudor panelling, and there's a big chest in the hall which makes one think of *The Mistletoe Bough*.'

'And this is the eldest son?'

'He is now.'

'I suppose there is mistletoe in the forest of Ys? Has this nice young fellow never taken advantage of that?'

Jess remained silent. Miss Oldacre rang a tiny peal of laughter.

'He has . . . ! I am sure of it. Oh, Jess, do tell me all about it. There is just time.'

Thus adjured and unable to resist such a charmer, Jess was beguiled into confession. To save her life, she couldn't have spoken of Cherrington. And Miss Oldacre, brilliant star, twinkled high above the gossip of the theatre. When Jess finished, Miss Oldacre said maternally:

'*On revient*. Your George has come to Manchester to see you, not our play.'

The taxi drew up at the stage door.

VIII.

As Jess ascended the stone stairs that led to the dressing-room, she passed Pummy. He gave her a curt nod. She was so astonished that she held up her hand.

'What is it?'

His voice was as curt as the nod.

'Mr Pumford, have I offended you?'

His face relaxed.

'Lord bless you, no. I'm worried. When I'm worried, I become an unholy terror.'

'Worried? About our show?'

'Oh no. That's going strong. I can't share my worry with you—not on these stairs, at any rate.'

He bustled off. Jess supposed that Pummy might be worrying about his wife or his children. It was difficult to envisage him as a paterfamilias. He seemed to be born to wear evening clothes and a white waistcoat and a shiny tall hat. Or to sit at his desk drawing up contracts. Perhaps, at this moment, Mrs. Pumford was ill. He had left her, as she knew, to go round the world with Sir Felix. He was Crewe's devoted slave. Crewe, the mere man, could rend asunder those whom God had joined together. Miss Oldacre was right. The stage exacted sacrifices from everybody connected with it. . . .

The irrepressible Florrie banished such reflections. All her notices were pasted on to a large piece of cardboard. She effervesced with excitement and exuberance.

'It means London town. Muds says so.'

Muds nodded solemnly.

'What does your boy say about it?'

It occurred to Jess that happy chance had furnished her with an opportunity to throw dust into the sparkling orbs of Miss Osborne.

'You can ask him presently. Captain Apperton will be here before the first act. I thought you wouldn't mind.'

'Captain Apperton?'

'He has come all the way from Canterbury to see me.'

'Well, I never . . . ! Pore Mr. Cherrington!'

The dust, such as it was, effectively blinded Florrie for the moment. She, too, wanted to know all about Captain Apperton. Was he rich and handsome? Had he given Jess a ring? And

where was it? Did he wear a moustache? Jess dealt faithfully with these questions till George tapped at the door. He made a superb entrance, a smart cavalry officer in khaki. Miss Osborne had never seen such brilliant boots, although her eyes didn't linger long upon them. George had been in dressing-rooms before, and knew how to make himself agreeable. He perpetrated one small blunder, mistaking Muds for a dresser. In less than five minutes he was carried off by Pell.

'Your boy?' exclaimed Florrie.

'One of them,' Jess replied casually.

Florrie feared that Mr. Cherrington's nose must be paining him. The call-girl's voice echoed along the passage:

'Beginners, please.'

Muds remained in her corner, beaming at Jess, now no longer a rival of her ewe-lamb. This captain would elope with Giggles. Probably pore Mr. Cherrington and he would fight a duel. The captain would cut him down. Fancy transported her swiftly to the snow scene in *The Corsican Brothers.*

Jess, dabbing at her face with a huge powder-puff, could see Muds reflected in the big looking-glass. She interpreted the beaming smile as proof of contentment. This struck her as amazing. What a life! To come to the theatre for seven or eight performances each week, to sit in a corner, to exchange gossip with dressers, to look at the picture papers!

'Do you find it dull, Mrs. Toop?'

'Me? Why, no. It's dull when I carn't come to the theatre. Don't worry about me, dear. I'm ever so happy, because we're in for a run. What worries me is unpaid rehearsals and short runs. That's crool, if you like. Rehearse for six weeks for nothing, and three weeks' run to bad business. That pips me.'

Her face grew lugubrious at the mere recollection of such catastrophes. Jess looked almost as solemn. With her alert imagination, she was trying to 'corner' herself, to behold herself as a looker on, a sort of camp follower, in the great theatrical army. It was hard to believe that Mrs. Toop had ever played leading boy. Nothing remained of her many charms except her smile and her small feet, of which she was immensely proud. And yet she was 'ever so happy,' simply because Florrie had made a hit and the future for a few months was reasonably assured.

'She is just part, a spare part, of an immense machine, grinding on and on, rain or shine.'

That was Jess's thought, with the inevitable corollary: 'Are we women to be regarded as machinery, mere cogs on the wheel of life? Must we accept resignedly, contentedly, the inscrutable decrees of destiny? What would happen to Mrs. Toop if Florrie failed to earn a salary?'

The call-girl cut short these reflections.

IX.

The second performance went better than the first. This ought to be so, because the players have lost nervousness and they know when and where the laughs are likely to come. The audience, too, is less critical. But if the rehearsals have been too great a strain on the endurance of the company, if the players at the *première* are keyed to too high a pitch, the reaction follows. Much, also, depends upon the play. More, perhaps, on the audience. Anyway, Manchester came to the second night, prepared by a kind press, to enjoy itself. And Manchester was not disappointed. The advance booking had begun. Pell said to Cherrington:

'The London contract will be signed to-morrow. It's a cert.'

Miss Oldacre was of the same opinion. Felix Crewe, whether he could act himself or not, was too keen a business man to 'turn down' a money-making comedy. And, possibly, of all the great towns, Manchester was the surest index of what London would accept. Manchester, admittedly, had a 'nose' for a sound play —a nose that sniffed contemptuously at bad craftsmanship. All, therefore, was well.

George, need it be added, exhibited enthusiasm and amazement. He, too, failed to recognise Giggles as Jess. Leaping, hot-foot, from one extreme to the other, he was prepared to acclaim Jess as a 'winner.' Her performance astounded this good, honest fellow. Jess was better than Irene Seaton! . . . Why had he underrated Jess? What a little topper she was! Pretty as a peach, too, even in her rags. And, quite apart from her acting, Jess in Manchester was not the Jess of Sloden-Pauncefort. She had become animated; charged, so to speak, with electricity; a magnet intensely attractive. Pell, who had known George all his life, commented sagaciously on this:

'Jess has spoofed the lot of us. She has personality. It gets over. The little dear has come to life. For the first time, she is really living. And I scraped the moss off her. I found the nugget.'

George assimilated these mixed metaphors. Pellie continued:

'She may go very far.'

George was startled. At that moment he was thinking: 'Why shouldn't Jess go to India with me?' He murmured absently: 'How far?'

'Bang round the world. There must be no hurry about that. For a year or two she must stick to London like a leech—establish herself. If she does that, if she captures 'em, let her cut loose. A popular actress in every sense of the word should be properly produced. I propose to run Jess. I shall run her for all she's worth. And it will be real jam for me.'

All this was said after the last curtain, when George was waiting in the foyer of the theatre. He intended to escort Jess back to her hotel.

Confounded by Pellie's proposals, he blurted out:

'Run her?' A horrible suspicion made his knees as wax. 'I say, old chap, are you engaged to Jess?—What?'

Pellie's laugh exorcised suspicion.

'Lord, no.' Then, with extreme gravity, sinking his voice, he began to play Banderillero, deftly planting little darts into the taurine George.

'Marriage would wreck everything. I guard against that. She must give undivided energies and love, *and love*, to her right job. I see no reason why she shouldn't play Juliet, but not off the stage, my boy. You, as her old pal, agree with me, don't you?'

George, head down, pawing the earth, ready to charge, bellowed at him:

'No; I don't.'

'Bless my soul!' Pellie adjusted a neat pince-nez and stared at an infuriated animal, who went on bellowing:

'I have never heard such damned wicked rot in all my life. Here's a little darling who's built from the ground up to make some decent chap the happiest man in the world, to be the mother of babies as sweet as herself, to—to bloom like a rose in a lovely garden, not to wither in a beastly theatre. I know all about theatres. I know what hell the stage plays with girls. I know—curse it!—I'm too rattled to go on. Run Jess! . . . Produce Jess. . . . God intended her to do the right sort of producing. Don't you interfere with God!'

He mopped his forehead, glaring savagely at the astonished

little man. Out of the fullness of heart had proceeded speech. Pellie said quietly:

'All right, George, go slow! I can understand your point of view. You think it's the mission of a woman to make a decent chap, like yourself, happy, eh?'

'Of course I do,' growled George.

'And suppose you can't make her happy? Has that occurred to you? If there is one fact that sticks out of life, as I see it, it's this: what's sauce for the gander is no longer sauce for the goose. Your modern girl is a bit fed up with this notion of consecrating all her energies to making men happy and comfy. You may not know it—I am sure you don't—but Jess is modern, and amazingly intelligent. I should like to rub this well into you, but gently, without breaking your sensitive skin. Are your keen about your profession?'

'You know I am.'

'Good! Now, for the sake of argument, suppose that you were head over heels in love with Jess.'

George's face relaxed.

'That's easy to suppose. I was in love with her once—madly. I might fall in love again quite easily, and even more madly.'

Pellie smiled. A glimpse into George's heart was vouchsafed him.

'Right! If your love for her was worth having, you would consider her happiness, wouldn't you?'

'I should.'

'Good again! Here, then, we have two persons about to go into partnership. And each has a profession. I don't wish to be offensive, but, humanly speaking, Jess has a bigger chance of making a thundering success in her profession than you have in yours. Anyway, for the purposes of our little argument I ask you to concede that.'

'It may be true.'

'Thanks! Now, if it were obvious to you that Jess felt about her profession the same enthusiasm you feel for yours, would you be prepared to chuck the Service and devote yourself to her, ministering to her as you would expect her to minister to you if she went with your regiment to India? And, by the way, English roses do not exactly bloom on the Indian plains.'

'You ask me if I would chuck the Service, and hang about theatres for the rest of my life? Most certainly not.'

Pellie continued quietly:

'I expected that answer. It comes down the ages. It's rather moth-eaten. It means, simply, that men, like yourself, still exact from women more than they are prepared to give. You asked me just now not to interfere with the Deity. If Omnipotence intended all women to be wives and mothers, He would have ordained that Jacks in England should be as plentiful as Jills. I may be wrong about Jess. The sheltered, simple life of Sloden-Pauncefort might make for her happiness, but I don't think so. Why did she leave it—against great pressure? Because there's something in her, something indefinable at present, which must find expression. My humble mind can't apprehend the possibility of a man interfering with Omnipotence and Omniscience, but I do think that it is wicked and foolish to interfere with a woman unless you are absolutely sure that such interference will make for her lasting happiness. I expect we shall find Jess waiting for us at the stage door.'

X.

The night being fine, Jess had decided to walk back to the hotel. After the heat of the theatre, the cool breeze of the street was delightfully refreshing. It struck her as odd that Pellie should play gooseberry. And she wondered vaguely what had happened to Cherrington. Probably he had some business to attend to with Pummy. George had been invited to sup with the quartet, and round off the square.

George strode along martially and in silence. Pellie prattled as usual. He had come to the conclusion that George was quite likely to propose to Jess *au clair de la lune*. And, possibly, he overestimated George's physical attractiveness. What a bull of a fellow he was! It had not yet occurred to him that Cherrington might marry Jess. He believed that Cherry was obsessed with his dramatic ambitions.

As they left the stage door, a gaunt, shabby man accosted them —one of the 'has beens' of the profession, derelict after many voyages. He spoke in the deep diapason tones of the ex-tragedian.

'I apologise for troubling you,' he said magnificently. 'I am Wimpole.'

The name made no impression upon George and Jess. Pellie stopped instantly.

'You are John Wimpole?'

'I am John Wimpole. I am what is left of him. You, sir, may have seen me play.'

'I have. But what can I do for you, Mr. Wimpole?'

'If my performance of any part happened to please you, sir, I should not feel offended if you offered me a night's board and lodging, or its equivalent.'

Pellie was not proof against this poignant appeal, delivered with sonorous impressiveness. He pressed something into a thin hand.

'Might I ask the name of my benefactor?'

'My name is Pell.'

'Ah! You produced this play. My congratulations. I shall not forget you, Mr. Pell.'

He said this with the air of an emperor who had left his purse at home and who might confer some distinguished honour upon the privileged donor of a small grant in aid. Then he stalked away into the shadows.

'I never heard of John Wimpole,' said George.

Pellie said grimly:

'You would hear from him, if he knew your name. I shall. He was something of a star in his day.'

They reached the hotel. In the hall, Cherrington was standing near the lift, evidently waiting for them. Jess thought that he must have a bad headache, but he said nothing till they reached the parlour, which was empty.

'Where is Miss Oldacre?' asked Jess.

'I have very bad news,' said Cherrington.

They looked anxiously into his pale, troubled face.

'Sir Felix Crewe died of heart failure about two hours ago.'

(To be continued.)

THE BOYHOOD OF WORDSWORTH.

BORN APRIL 7, 1770.

I.—Home.

A point of life between my parents' dust
And yours, my buried Little-ones, am I.

We know all too little of the life of the household to which William Wordsworth was born, on the 7th of April, 150 years ago. His mother,

She who was the heart
And hinge of all our learnings and our loves,

died when she was barely thirty, his father barely forty-two. Neither of them left a will. Administrators—a brother of each parent—were appointed to wind up the complicated finances, and to assume responsibility for the education of the five orphans, a duty they performed more or less conscientiously, if somewhat perfunctorily. The furniture, and everything movable, was sold with the least possible loss of time. The house reverted to its owner. The children after leaving school were all 'squandered abroad,' in Dorothy's own phrase, and Cockermouth knew them no more. A cherished Family Bible is almost the only relic of that ill-fated household that remains to its descendants.

Still, a certain amount of information has been gathered from an inspection of the legal papers in the keeping of the representatives of the family lawyers, and still more from a volume which has only recently come to light, and offers instructive details concerning the middle-class provincial life, during the eighteenth century, in which the poet and his brothers and sister were brought up. This volume is a small quarto book of some 260 pages, and is written throughout in John Wordsworth's beautiful eighteenth-century penmanship, and entitled

Rental of Lands
and
Schedule of real and Personal
Securities
belonging to
Jno. Wordsworth.

John Wordsworth (1741–1783) was the second son, and fourth and youngest child, of Richard Wordsworth (1690–1760) who, coming from Yorkshire into Westmorland, became steward of the Lowther property from 1723 to 1737, if not longer, and Clerk of the Peace for Westmorland from 1745 to 1750. Richard, the poet's grandfather, married in 1732 Mary Robinson of Appleby, one of a family, who with their kinsmen the Parkins well-nigh monopolised at that time the municipal honours of that tiny borough and county town. Shortly afterwards he bought a property at Sockbridge, a hamlet some two miles south-west of Penrith, and there spent the remainder of his life. On December 18, 1745, the last engagement fought on British soil took place at Clifton, hardly two miles away, but we are told that the Clerk of the Peace, who was mindful of his title, and was also Receiver-General for the County, had prudently removed the public funds into the fastnesses of the mountains. Fifteen years later he died.

John followed his father in the law and in the service of the house of Lowther, but we have no record of his general education, his training for a legal life, or his manner of entry upon it. There is evidence, however, that he was resident at Cockermouth by December, 1764, when he was twenty-three, and as we read in Ferguson's 'Cumberland and Westmorland M.P.'s,' p. 321, that 'after 1761 the supineness of the then Earl of Egremont abandoned the borough to the Lowthers, who bought up all the tenements that could give votes,' it would seem that Sir James Lowther sent the son of his former steward to supervise his interests there, as he had already employed John's first-cousin, the celebrated 'Jack Robinson,' in a similar capacity at Appleby. At all events, at Cockermouth, Sir James and his youthful agent were no less successful than their Wyndham predecessors in safely pocketing their borough, for no election was contested within it between 1722 and 1818 (*ibid.*, p. 171).

Wordsworth himself defined his father's position as 'attorney-at-law and law-agent to Sir James Lowther, afterwards Earl of Lonsdale,' but plenty of other work came to hand. Law-agent meant political agent for the magnate who has been described as the Napoleon of borough-mongering, and John Wordsworth's activities were not confined to Cockermouth. If the latter seat was safe, it was far otherwise with the County of Cumberland and the contumacious city of Carlisle, and at the critical elections of 1768 and 1774 the 'law-agent' had his hands very full. He was Bailiff of

the Borough of Cockermouth, an office that carried with it that of Recording Officer, and was therefore not without potential value to the representative of the Lowther interest.

He also became, in the old-world phraseology, Coroner of the Seigniory of Millom, a large tract of territory bounded by the sea, the Duddon, and the Esk, which Sir James Lowther purchased in 1774 from the heiress of the Hudlestons for £20,000. The Coroner's duties were to maintain the interests of his employer, and it was on his return from their fulfilment that he lost his way riding over Cold Fell, and contracted the illness to which he succumbed on December 30, 1783.

John Wordsworth's memorandum-book, already referred to, begins with an abstract of his father's will, dated June 7, 1760, and continues with a record of the subsequent transactions with his mother, his brother Richard, and his sister Ann, wife of the Rev. Thomas Myers. His father died within three weeks of the signing of his will, leaving the estate at Sockbridge to his widow for her life, and afterwards to his son John, but on January 2, 1765, an agreement was made whereby the mother handed over all her interest in the property to her son John, in return for an annuity of £50 to be paid to her by him. No bequest to John Wordsworth is mentioned, except this reversionary interest. In the following May Mrs. Wordsworth left Sockbridge to reside with her elder son, who was Collector of Customs at the port of Whitehaven, where she remained till her death in 1773.

His mother's departure was the prelude to John Wordsworth's engagement to Ann Cookson, a daughter of the leading mercer of Penrith and his wife Dorothy, sister and heiress of James Crackanthorpe of Newbiggin Hall. On page 10 of the memorandum-book its methodical compiler gives his marriage contract, dated Feb. 4, 1766, by which Wm. Cookson undertook to pay John Wordsworth £500 on the day of the latter's marriage, and to sign a bond for another £500, payable within twelve months of his death, and to make his daughter Ann equal in point of fortune with the rest of his younger children (of whom only one survived her). In return John Wordsworth undertook to leave his wife such an annual sum as should be equivalent to a full third part of all his freehold lands. The marriage took place on the following day, the bride just eighteen, the bridegroom just twenty-four.

The marriage settlement is followed by twenty-five or so pages given up to details of the acreage, receipts and payments in con-

nection with the Sockbridge property, which remained let after the departure of Mrs. Wordsworth. There were also the various 'Cattle Gates' upon the moor, the property of Ingmire Close in Penrith (which John Wordsworth had bought from his father-in-law in the year of his marriage, and retained to his death in order to secure a vote for Cumberland), as well as the two fields called St. Leonards and Sand-Air on either side of the Derwent, below the bridge at Cockermouth, which he farmed himself from the date of their purchase for £200 in 1771 till his death. On them he grazed his mare and a cow, and the name Sand-Air (? *area*) suggests 'the sandy fields' in which the future poet

made one long bathing of a summer's day.

There were other small properties in various parts of Cumberland, including the Town End tenement at Ravenglass, of the sale of which on September 14, 1816, Crabb Robinson gives a racy account.

Apparently a less successful venture was one of £23 10*s.* 0*d.*, in '$\frac{1}{32}$ share of the Brigg *Welcome* of Mary-Port,' for only one 'Dividend of profits' was received. Perhaps the good Brigg *Welcome* fell into the hands of Paul Jones, who was raiding the coast of Cumberland at that time. On the other hand he was for the most part repaid by the kinsfolk and others, to whom he advanced sundry loans. They are recorded with great care; on the left-hand page the amount due, and on the right the amount paid or received, as the case might be. We learn that he had several clerks; and until his wife's death a succession of man-servants—not without domestic tribulation—for the first of them after a year's service 'ran away, hav^{e} rob^{d} me.' His successors at the higher annual wage of eight guineas were more honest, honesty at first being assured by their master's prudent system of deferred payments.

That John Wordsworth took a pride in his garden is shown by his daughter Dorothy, in an unpublished letter to Lady Beaumont dated August 7, 1805:—

'The house where my Brothers and I were born, and where my Father died . . . . is at the outskirts of the town, the garden bordering on the river Derwent, or rather a *Terrace* which overlooks the river, a spot which I remember as vividly as if I had been there but the other day, though I have never seen it in its neatness, as my Father and Mother used to keep it, since I was just six years old, a few months before my Mother's death. I

visited the place again at the age of twenty-three, and all was in ruin, the terrace walk buried and choked up with the old privot hedge, which had formerly been most beautiful—roses and privot intermingled—the same hedge where the sparrows were used to build their nests.'

Wordsworth, in his note to the poem on 'The Sparrow's Nest,' gives a similar account of the terrace—'our favourite playground,' with its 'fine view of the river and Castle.' The work was done by a jobbing gardener whose payments are methodically entered in the account-book.

Many pages are taken up with the various outgoings of the household for stores, provisions, repairs, etc. For ten months, however, from March 6, 1775, we find 'an Account of House Expenses,' which simply consists of 'gave my wife for Market, £1 1*s.* 0*d.*' on every Monday, Monday being market day in Cockermouth. The tradesman's account that goes farthest back is that of the painter for the period December, 1764, to April 1766; and as the first account is much larger than its successors, it would seem that considerable decoration and renovation were undertaken for the reception of the new mistress in February, 1766.

The apothecary's accounts suggest a healthy household, but were abnormally heavy (£4 8*s.* 10*d.*) for the two and a half months ending March 8, 1778, the day of Mrs. Wordsworth's death at Penrith. After July, 1779, £1 13*s.* 8*d.* sufficed for the apothecary's claim for nearly three years.

The hospitality of the house in no way ran contrary to the tendency of the age in regard to the consumption of wine and spirits, on which no less a sum than £182 4*s.* 3*d.*, was expended in the course of twelve years—'White wine,' port, sherry, rum, gin and brandy are all specified, both in cask and bottle. Payments to the brewery company for small beer for the same period totalled £66 4*s.* 7*d.*, and there is another page of entries headed 'Malt,' which includes occasional half-barrels of porter. Very possibly entertainment on a generous scale was expected of a man in the position of Sir James Lowther's representative, especially at election times. The coal bill makes strange reading nowadays. In 1782 eight cartloads, brought from a pit five miles away, cost ten shillings.

A careful study of the accounts gives ground for the conjecture that lengthy visits of the whole family to the grandparents at

Penrith, as Wordsworth himself has hinted, were by no means infrequent.

As illustrating the manners of the time, it may be noted that the funeral expenses of John Wordsworth, given in the administrators' accounts, amounted to £62 17*s.* 0½*d.*

II.—School.

> Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
> Fostered alike by beauty and by fear:
> Much favoured in my birth-place, and no less
> In that beloved Vale to which erelong
> We were transplanted.

The pages devoted by John Wordsworth to the cost of the education of his children are of special interest. Richard (born Aug. 19, 1768) was entered at the Rev. Mr. Gilbanks' Grammar School at Cockermouth in April, 1774, and was joined there in April, 1776, by his brother William (born April 7, 1770). This arrangement apparently only lasted till the following October, after which there is no record of any expenditure on behalf of the boys till 'Richard and William went to Hawkeshead School at Whits. 1779. N.B.—Mr. Cookson paid the Fee to the Master on Entrance.' This very definite statement puts the date of the poet's entry at Hawkshead a year later than that usually given. 'At Whitsuntide' appears to mean after the summer holidays. It is probable that in the interval, during which their mother died, they resided with their grandparents at Penrith, where we know that William for a time attended a school kept by Dame Birkett. He says himself in his autobiographical memoranda, 'The time of my infancy and early boyhood was passed partly at Cockermouth and partly with my mother's parents at Penrith.' They would go to Hawkshead direct from Penrith. Mr. Cookson paid the entrance fee. His bill of charges for 1779 was exceptionally heavy, and would include the cost of education at Penrith and of outfit for Hawkshead.

In October, 1780, John (born December 4, 1772) and Christopher (born June 9, 1774) were entered with Mr. Gilbanks, and remained with him till John followed his elder brothers to Hawkshead in January, 1782, while Christopher did not do so till August, 1785. Richard left Hawkshead at Christmas, 1785, William in June (or possibly October) 1787, John in December of the same year, while

no record of any payment for Christopher appears after June, 1792. There is no entry in John Wordsworth's accounts of any discharge of the Hawkshead bills for the first half of 1783, but they were probably paid by him, and not entered before his death on Dec. 30. His last entry in the book is dated October 7.

We know from 'The Prelude' that the boys were at home when their father died, and that they attended his funeral. The remainder of those sad holidays was passed at Penrith, though the subsequent custom was for the winter holidays to be spent with the Wordsworth uncle at Whitehaven, while in the summer the boys were under the charge of their Cookson uncle in his parents' house, on the site which is still occupied by the principal mercery establishment of Penrith. They were free to return home about June 20 and December 20, returning to Hawkshead about August 4 and January 20. There is evidence of a short Easter vacation in 1784, spent at Penrith, and again in 1791, spent by Christopher at Whitehaven.

'The Prelude' also tells us that the boys rode from Hawkshead to Cockermouth in December 1783, and 'horse hire, 5*s*.' is entered as paid to John Peel in the summer of 1784, but at Christmas, 1785, it is 'chaise hire' for the first time, though the word replaces an erased 'horse-hire,' which may suggest what had been the custom till that date. The cost amounted to £2 18*s*. 8*d*., but there were now four boys, and the date corresponds with a period of great improvement in the roads. In June, 1786, the charge fell to £1 16*s*. 0*d*., and in 1789 and 1791 it varied from 8*s*. 6*d*., to 10*s*. It is definitely entered as chaise hire, but competition may have become keen, and a two-wheeled conveyance, or one shared with other travellers, may have sufficed for a single boy.

Both before and after the father's death the half-yearly payments at Hawkshead are sometimes specified and sometimes grouped in one sum. From December, 1779, to December, 1784, Hugh Tyson was paid for board and lodging at the rate of five guineas a half-year for each boy; after the latter date Mrs. Ann Tyson is named as the recipient till the summer of 1788. For the following year and a half the entry is simply 'Bills at Hawkshead.' Subsequent payment for the solitary Christopher was made to John Rainforth.

As was to be expected, a formidable item is the account of the shoemaker, who was first Mackereth, then Suart. In 1784 no less a sum than £6 4*s*. 9*d*. was paid to him on behalf of the three boys then at the school, and as we learn that 5*s*. 6*d*. was the cost

of a new pair of shoes, and 1*s.* 3*d.* the average charge for repairs, the wear and tear must have been considerable. Separate payments are recorded to the doctor, Charles Robinson, whose services were but seldom required, though Richard appears to have been seriously ill in the summer of 1781, when Dr. Atkinson was paid a guinea and a half 'for his journey to attend Richard,' and Mrs. Tyson given 'one guinea for additional Trouble and Attendance.' Among other creditors were the writing-master, Joseph Varty, the bookseller, William Todhunter, who as a hatter appears to have also ministered to the outside of the head, the ironmonger, George Parke (one wonders if he sold skates), the mercer, David Moore, and the tailor, William Tyson, but the making of 'Cloaths' for the boys seems to have been principally entrusted to tradesmen of Whitehaven.

Mention must not be omitted of Mr. Mingay, dancing master, who on Dec. 10, 1785, was paid £5 4*s.* 0*d.* for 'teaching R. W. J. and C. to dance.'

In February, 1784, '2 vols. Homer and 1 vol. Lucian for my nephews' were paid for by Uncle Wordsworth, but apart from this there are no entries that throw any light on the individual characteristics of Richard and John. On William's behalf, more charges for books are entered than for any of the brothers. On Sept. 20, 1784, eightpence was paid 'for postage of a letter from Master William Wordsworth at Keswick for some books, etc.'—a puzzling entry in mid-term. In 1786 a Demosthenes (4*s.*), 'a Hedricks Lexicon' (21*s.*), and two books (7*s.*) were bought for him.

For Christopher, the future scholar of the family, 'an erasmus' and 'a Mair's introduction' were bought in 1784, when he had reached the age of ten, but we gain no clue to the manner of his education between the Christmas of 1781 and his entrance at Hawkshead in August, 1785. No payments for him are recorded after June, 1792, and he entered Cambridge in the following October. It is clear that his start in life was less costly than that of any of his brothers.

The life of liberty led by the boys in the boarding-house, or rather cottage, of Ann Tyson has been imaginatively described in 'The Prelude,' and a sketch given of her character 'so kind and motherly,' and even of her raiment. The writer of these notes has been privileged by the kindness of its public-spirited preserver to examine the battered and weather-stained ledger in which 'the grey-haired Dame' kept the record of her charges. It is incoherent, and in many respects incomplete; its spelling fantastic, and its

arithmetic inaccurate, but it does add to our knowledge of 'the Sabine fare' tempered by 'plain comforts' set before the boys.

'Karts of coles, karts of pets (peats) and canles' are charged for, cakes are not an infrequent entry, 'shugr' was apparently quite unrationed, while

> bees that soar for bloom
> High as the highest peak of Furness-fells

brought them the 'hune' for which Hawkshead is still famous. On one occasion, perhaps a birthday, a bottle of wine is entered for Christopher at 2*s.* 4*d.*

It is nowhere definitely stated, but it seems certain that all four brothers lived in the same 'lowly cottage,' though only during the autumn term of 1785 were they all in residence at once. In 1788 John's place was taken by his cousin, Richard Wordsworth (born 1777), who a year later was joined by his uncle, Robinson Wordsworth, his senior by a bare two years. In the way of luxuries the Wordsworths appear to have been treated with a normal average of indulgence. Among their schoolfellows, Gawthrop, whose stay was short (1786–7), was charged for frequent 'shugr, apels, resins, nutmegs, tee, a bott. of wine' and even 'a room extrordinary,' presumably a bedroom to himself, at a cost of half a guinea. Wm. Knott (1785), Losh (1786), Greenwood (1786–7), who is elsewhere stated to have been 'the Minstrel of the Troop, who blew his flute alone upon the rock' ('Prelude' ii. 168), and Bowstead (1788–9) make short appearances, and their extras are insignificant. Wordsworth wrote in 'The Prelude,' ii. 81,

> Exclude
> A little weekly stipend, and we lived
> Through three divisions of the quartered year
> In penniless poverty.—But now to School,
> From the half-yearly holiday returned,
> We came with weightier purses, that sufficed
> To furnish treats more costly.

The weekly stipend was paid by Ann Tyson, and seems to have varied between twopence and sixpence. It was usually threepence, never less in the case of the Wordsworth boys, rising to sixpence as they grew older. The administrators' accounts throw only a fitful light on the weight in the purses with which the boys returned to school. Sums varying from 5*s.* 3*d.* to one guinea are

entered irregularly at the conclusion of some of the vacations, and, on the whole, William fared better than his brothers.

The school half-year usually consisted of twenty-one weeks, and in 1779 the payment for board and lodging for that period was five guineas. By 1785 the charge had been raised to six guineas, and in 1788 new-comers were charged seven.

Wordsworth is generally supposed to have ended his school time at Hawkshead in June, 1787, but the curious fact emerges from Ann Tyson's ledger that he returned with the other boys on August 5 of that year, and was charged for nine weeks' board. That would take him to October 7, when he returned to Penrith for Dorothy to prepare his 'cloaths' for Cambridge. 'Minstrel' Greenwood, a future Fellow of Trinity, left Hawkshead at the same intermediate time, and as there is no mention of school fees, the probability is that they were there as gentlemen at large rather than as schoolboys.

There are still many gaps in our knowledge of the daily life—none greater than on the question of religious observance. Wordsworth speaks with affection of

> the snow-white Church upon her hill
> . . . . . sending out
> A gracious look all over her domain,

but nowhere do we get a hint of his ever having set foot within it, either by choice or by compulsion. We are left to form our own conclusions on slender evidence; the religious indifference of his guardians and of the period, his protest against compulsory chapel at Cambridge, and, perhaps, his picture of Ann Tyson setting out—quite unaccompanied—to church.

Through all these years, Dorothy (born December 25, 1771) was far away. In a letter quoted above she tells Lady Beaumont that she left her father's house for good at Christmas 1777, three months before her mother's death. The pages devoted to her in her father's memoranda state that Dolly, as she was invariably called in her childhood, 'left Penrith for Halifax in a chaise with Mr. and Miss Threlkeld on Saturday, June 13, 1778. Mr. Cookson gave Miss Threlkeld 5 G^{as} towards her conveyance, etc.' The annual payment to Miss Threlkeld was ten guineas, the same as for the boys. No light is thrown on the kind of education Dolly received, though there is a suggestion of what may have been six months' schooling at Hipperholm, two miles from Halifax; nor is

there any mention of her ever leaving Yorkshire between 1778 and 1787, or of her father visiting her there.

Three weeks after her father's death, Richard Wordsworth charged the estate for 'a long letter to Mr. Buckle of York, with Commission for taking election of Guardian,' and a week later he received a reply from Mr. Buckle that 'he intended to send a Commission to Halifax for Miss Dolly Wordsworth to elect Guardians upon, and Miss Threlkeld was notified accordingly.' Mr. Buckle's fee was £18 19*s.* 6*d.* Whoever did the electing, posterity may be grateful that 'Cousin Betsy Threlkeld' became the guardian of the exiled orphan. She was a first cousin of Dorothy's mother, and a woman universally beloved and respected. In middle life she married Mr. John Rawson of Mill House, Halifax, and to the last her ward always spoke of her as 'my Aunt,' and regarded her as her second mother. For nine years she was solely responsible for Dorothy's education and upbringing, and great is her claim to our admiration and gratitude. Early in her sixteenth year that education seems to have been regarded as complete, and Dorothy returned to Penrith to take up her abode with her grandparents in the spring of 1787, the year in which the two brothers who were nearest to her age, and dearest to her heart, left school.

GORDON G. WORDSWORTH.

CUCKOO!

BY ALBERT G. LATHAM.

Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

Half a score of appropriate quotations leap to my lips. But I crowd them back. You have gammoned the poets of all ages, me you shall not gammon. Poets are children. When I too was a child and thought as a child, it was pure joy to hear you. But now! No, I have tasted the forbidden fruit. My eyes are opened to the knowledge of good and evil. And instead of following your call to the woods, myself as blithe and careless as a woodland creature, here I sit in the sweet of the year, sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, brooding over infinite, ultimate, unplumbable things.

Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

A rainbow spans the end of the valley from ridge to ridge of the embosoming hills, and beneath it gleams and babbles the river. For the rainbow too there are appropriate quotations. It is true I cannot exclaim with Campbell: 'I ask not proud Philosophy to teach me what thou art.' Proud Philosophy has condescended, and I am passably well versed in the laws of refraction. And so I scan the radiant miracle too, with an eye from which the scales have dropped. But in this case science has not killed poetry. The 'triumphal arch that fills the sky' does not threaten ruin because the Architect has deigned to unroll a corner of his plans before my eyes. It remains a radiant miracle.

No, I have no quarrel with the rainbow. It has not broken the moral laws. Thank heaven I can still say with Wordsworth: 'My heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky.' But as for the cuckoo—

Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

Cuckoo, forsooth! I believe you are in that plum-tree, which fancies itself a bridal bouquet. But I am not to be hoodwinked with your 'Cuckoo! Cuckoo!' I know all about you, you rogue. You are not a wandering voice, the disembodied spirit of spring, but very bird, and what a bird! Your morals are shady. Your past will not bear inspection. You have no valid title-deeds to the freehold of life, though you pose as Lord of the Manor of spring. The whole College of Heralds, in solemn conclave assembled, could

not authenticate your pedigree. Your ancestral tree is a parasite. You were left on a doorstep, so to speak. In a word, you are a supposititious child, foisted by a scheming mother on some unsuspecting hedge-sparrow, or robin, or reed-warbler.

Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

Yes, yes, I hear you. But I am proof against your charming, charm you never so wisely. I know all about you. You are the murderer of the lawful heirs. You have devoured the substance that should have nourished a whole brood. You are grown great on the ruin of a family.

And with what diabolical foresight and ingenuity was the crime accomplished! The egg that hatched you was no bigger than that which hatched your foster-brothers, though you were destined to grow to four times their bulk. For the fraud must not be detected. And it was cunningly smuggled into the legitimate nest by your frivolous mother, one of the Smart Set, who, having thus shifted her maternal responsibilities on to other shoulders, went gadding about the spring world free from care, gammoning the poets into hailing her as the 'blithe newcomer,' the 'darling of the Spring,' the 'beauteous stranger of the grove,' and all the rest of it.

Meanwhile you throve upon your stolen fare, you shouldered out of their rightful nest the sackless, featherless squabs, your foster-brethren, to perish miserably of cold and hunger. Nay, they even say that you have such a witching way with you that the bereaved parents themselves willingly condone your crime, that they will neglect their own offspring to cram your ravenous crop; in short, that they dote upon you as blindly as do the poets themselves. But me you shall never bewitch. I am a moral creature, you understand. I draw a sharp line between right and wrong. Your life has spoilt your song for me. I do not hold with poetic licence—not that kind.

Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

There he is in the very fir-tree, beneath which I am sitting beside the spring. And can it be fancy, or is there really a tang of irony in his note? Is it some subtle suggestion in the song itself, or is it the voice of conscience (for I am a moral creature, I draw a sharp line between right and wrong) that whispers: 'What about that ham and eggs?'

There now, the murder is out! I may as well make a clean breast of it. I had ham and eggs for breakfast. And I did not

even consume them soberly, as a meet sacrifice on the altar of Life. I did not merely eat to live. No, I gloated over them in the sizzling, and I waxed well-nigh lyrical over them in the eating. There was a spring frost on the grass when I rose, and I was sharpset.

Cuckoo ! Cuckoo !

This time there is no mistaking the ring of triumph in the rogue's tones. And, indeed, what becomes of my arraignment of the cuckoo in view of this damning evidence against myself ? He has turned the tables upon me. I am fallen from my high estate. I am no longer the high-minded accuser, I am in the dock by his side, and the whole of mankind is included with me in the indictment. For do not we men crowd the whole of creation out of the common nest ? Do we not devour the substance of myriads of generations ? My quarrel with the cuckoo has strangely widened. I am now like to be estranged with the whole of my kind.

Cuckoo ! Cuckoo !

No, not quite the whole. Let me be just to the human race. A few there be that have not bowed the knee to Baal. No age has been left without a witness. Was there not Daniel ? Were there not the Pythagoreans ? Are there not our present-day vegetarians ?

Clearly there are but two courses before me. I must turn vegetarian, or I must abandon my suit against the cuckoo. Honour amongst thieves !

But the vegetarians are cranks. And then their complexions ! In the human face, as in the garden bed, I prefer the blush-rose to the William Allen Richardson.

But are the vegetarians cranks ? Why ? Because they disagree with myself. But with which of myselves ? With that which arraigned the cuckoo, or with that which the cuckoo has arraigned ?

And when I see them yellow, is it not because I am looking on them with a jaundiced eye ? Have I never seen a sallow carnivore ? Or a pink and white vegetarian ? Am I not paltering with my conscience ? Am I not juggling with the syllogism ? I wrap you up a moral argument in a tissue of words, and then, hey presto ! by a trick of logical *legerdemain*, I present you with an aesthetic argument in its place.

And even if I perform the substitution so dexterously as to elude the attention of my audience, even if they are so innocent as to join issue with me on the new premiss, does my argument stand

any more firmly on an aesthetic than on a moral foundation? Put the case against the vegetarians at its worst, let them be as yellow as buttercups, how does that avail me? Would not that which I am pleased to call the vegetarian hue have entitled a Greek maiden to a niche in the *Anthology*? The Greek poets—you will grant me the Greeks knew beauty when they saw it—the Greek poets would have been ecstatic in its admiration, called it soft names in many a muséd rhyme, coined for it sugared epithets, praised it honey-yellow.

Or again, put the case for the vegetarians at its best, let them be 'more white and red than doves or roses are,' should I be any the more reconciled to their tenets?

No, let me be perfectly frank with myself. It is not what I have petulantly assumed to be the vegetarian complexion that I boggle at. I adore the William Allen Richardson. It is to-morrow morning's ham and eggs that stand between me and virtue. I am already gloating over them in anticipation.

Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

Or was it not rather '*cock-a-doodle-do*'? And well may the rascal crow over me! He has the best of the argument. The case will clearly have to be settled out of court. The cuckoo's character will have to be rehabilitated.

After all, we cannot all be pioneers, even in morals. Cave man had doubtless many highly objectionable ways, which we have clambered out of, as we have clambered out of the cave. But who thinks of twitting him with them at this time of day? We cannot all be climbers, some of us must be steps. I am content to be a step.

And if I usurp with tyrannic hand the usufruct of whatever I find around me, do I, in my turn, have things all my own way? Pray tell me that! Am I not made use of, without so much as 'by your leave,' for alien purposes which I cannot even divine?

I can hatch no moral from this egg, though I brood over it till it be addled. I find no end, in wandering mazes lost. Why should I run my head against a stone wall, when so many wiser pates than mine have cracked themselves against it in vain?

And meanwhile the sweet spring is slipping by untasted. Nay, but I will be an eclectic philosopher, if philosophise I must. When nights be dark and ways be foul I will crouch at home over the embers, and be a pale-hued Pythagorean, or a gloomy Stoic, nay, a sour Cynic if you will, to the tune of 'tu-whit tu-whoo,' and

the unappetising odour of boiled cabbage. But in spring-time, in spring-time, the only pretty ring-time, Epicureanism shall be in season, to the tune of ' jug-jug, pee-weet, cuckoo,' and ginger shall be hot in the mouth, aye, and ham and eggs shall sizzle in the pan. I will make it up with the cuckoo, I will be at one with the poets.

Over yonder is a coppice, gold-spangled with primroses, where the throstle whistles the live-long day.

> Into the greenwood will I go,
> Where the blossoms blow and the birds are singing ;
> For in the grave when once I lie,
> Then earth shall cover ear and eye.
> I shall see no more the blossoms blow,
> Nor the song of the birds hear ringing.

Thither goes the cuckoo before me, as if he had read my thoughts. He knows the coppice, too. And he has bewitched me, as he bewitches everybody. Well the rascal knew he should have the last word. But what care I ? Let him have it ! I ask the permission of the court to withdraw the charge.

Cuckoo ! Cuckoo !

ANOTHER PLEA FOR OLD AGE HOMES.

HAVING read with deep interest in the CORNHILL for November 1919 Miss Sellers' 'Plea for Old Age Homes,' and being able by long experience to endorse all she says as to the troubles and the needs of the aged, I am anxious to bring to the notice of the public the fact that some Homes such as Miss Sellers describes already exist in the Metropolitan area, and are doing good and useful work. That the first of these Homes was opened November 5, 1869, and that they kept their Jubilee November 5, 1919, may add to the interest attached to the growth and development of the work, and encourage lovers of the aged to help those who sorely need assistance, and who are neglected more for want of thought than from want of heart. A brief retrospect of how the work began, and the position it occupies at present may prove of interest.

Those of us who are old enough to recall life as it was fifty years ago are appalled at the changes time has made, and it is almost impossible to realise the poverty that then existed in our midst. A middle-aged lady became interested in the hard fate of the aged poor; their wages in working days rendered saving impossible, and after bringing up a family and seeing them settled in life, as old age crept on the fact had to be faced that home, liberty, and friends must be given up, and a refuge sought in the big house ere long; outdoor relief being utterly inadequate to pay rent and provide food.

At this time an old couple were brought to the notice of this lady, who, on visiting them, found that they were in a state of semi-starvation, simply from the fact that they were past work. A life of honest toil seemed likely to end in the separation of two who were all in all to each other, and their sore distress at the prospect of being parted, and having to give up their home touched the kind heart of their visitor, Miss Green, who resolved that this should not be. She found that they could live on the small parish allowance if they had no rent to pay; it was the landlord's weekly rent of 3*s*. for their single room that was impossible. Talking over her visit with a friend, she was told of a case that much interested her. The lady was a weekly visitor at the workhouse, and had been attracted by a superior woman who confided to her her sorrowful history. The death of her husband, after a long

illness which had swallowed up all their savings, had left her destitute.

Too feeble and too old to work, she was obliged to enter the workhouse. Its necessary restrictions, undesirable companionship, and loss of liberty were more than usually trying to one who had seen better days, and she was earnestly praying that in some way or other she might be helped to a home, however humble, and told her visitor that she was expecting God would provide one for her, as a few days previously a visitor had placed in her hand a card on which were these words, 'Thy prayer is heard.' These two cases decided Miss Green that her work in life should be providing Homes for the Aged; a resolution speedily made, but enthusiastically carried out, and leading to great and unexpected results.

Miss Green gathered a few sympathetic friends together; they agreed to rent a small house containing eight rooms in Portland Road, Notting Hill. This was done, and on November 5, 1869, Mrs. Anderson was transferred from the workhouse to one of the rooms where she was a happy and respected inmate for many years. The married couple soon followed, and the house was speedily filled with similar cases. The applications were so numerous that early in 1871 a second house was taken, and the prosperity and growth of the Charity assured. This small beginning has in fifty years grown from an acorn to a giant oak, and no fewer than 1000 persons have been sheltered and cared for in their last years.

Nineteen Homes are now open in London and the suburbs; thirteen of these are the property of the Charity, ten of them are freehold, three leasehold, while the remaining six are rented. They contain 179 rooms and shelter 201 old people. They are also free of debt.

It is difficult to estimate the benefits received by the inmates; but freedom from the pressing care of a weekly rent and the cost of medical attendance, the knowledge that a good fire will be provided during the five winter months and that each inmate has a friend in the lady visitor induces longevity. A residence of over twenty years is a common experience, while the maximum of thirty years has been reached more than once. One hundred and seventy of our friends are Old Age Pensioners; many of these have attained four score years, two are over ninety, and several more are likely to celebrate their ninetieth birthday ere long.

Volumes might be filled with the pathetic stories of these humble heroes and heroines.

Miss Green lived to see fourteen Homes opened and filled ere she passed to her rest on October 7, 1907, in her eighty-third year.

In addition to the work done by the parent society, Miss Green had the satisfaction of knowing that no less than twenty-seven Homes, worked by local committees in various parts of London and the neighbourhood, had been opened, and that her scheme had reached Toronto where many homes for the aged had been started on the same plan.

The one desire of those who carry out the work is that each inmate should feel that the room is her Home, that she is free to come and go as she likes, and that her friends and relations can visit her as often as she pleases. Each inmate brings her own furniture, and the fact that she is surrounded by the treasures of past years adds much to her comfort.

Freedom and the love of Home are the two things dearest to English men and women. Do we smile at the love bestowed on the possessions, so often of such small value? Does it not rather bring to our minds the words of the poetess who wrote

> 'I love it, I love it, and who shall dare
> To chide me for loving this old arm-chair?'

It was thought when Old Age Pensions were granted that the difficulties of finding Homes for the aged would cease, and that by the fireside in almost every house either grandfather or grandmother would find a place, but this soon proved a fallacy, and the fault is not altogether on the side of the children. A daughter may ardently wish to take care of an aged parent, but her husband who is the breadwinner does not see it in the same light; if it is the husband's relative that needs the home then oftentimes the daughter-in-law, with full hands already, feels distressed at the proposal. Nor is this the only consideration; a home where little children are always present is not suitable for the aged, as they need quiet and rest, and though the grandchildren are loved they prove too much for the comfort of the aged ones.

We are often asked for a room by a widow who has been the guest of her children for a time because she longs for a place to call her own and where rest is possible.

As a rule our friends are cheerful and contented, and it is not uncommon to hear some of them say 'I have never been so happy

in all my life.' Of course we have those who are querulous and hard to please, but one has to remember that in many cases the infirmities of age are pressing heavily, and that the dim eye, the deaf ear, or the rheumatic limbs often form a sufficient excuse for the want of a cheerful countenance. The war years have been a time of trial, there have been raids in the immediate neighbourhood of all the Homes, but mercifully no damage was done, and the bravery of the inmates has been beyond praise. The inmates, too, have not been idle, many of them have been working hard for the sailors and soldiers, and the knitting of socks and mufflers has been a joy to many.

We are keeping our Jubilee, and in the summer the inmates of all the Homes were entertained at a garden party in grounds at Kensington lent for the occasion. This festival took place on July 18, the day before the Peace celebrations; and the sight of the decorations and of the soldiers encamped in the park greatly added to the enjoyment of a never-to-be-forgotten day. For the last five years our old folk have missed the annual tea-party given at Christmas as well as the summer drive that was usually arranged for their pleasure, consequently the fête was doubly enjoyed. We hope the ordinary treats will soon be resumed, for, in spite of all the efforts made to help and cheer these aged ones in the evening of life, life in one room must be somewhat monotonous.

What is there to prevent every parish having its Home of Rest for worn-out workers? Where the closing months or years of life may be spent in comfort and freedom from care as they ought to be; and where the presence of the aged is sure to lead to the personal acts of kindness that so materially brighten and sweeten the lives of the recipients; to say nothing of the happiness bestowed on the givers.

Our work at present is beset with many problems which may be well described as the aftermath of the war. The expenses of the Homes are more than doubled; rates, taxes, coal, and gas must be paid; and besides these, repairs and the very necessary cleaning and doing up of rooms, left undone during the war owing to the impossibility of obtaining workmen, must be faced.

When one room is occupied as kitchen, bedroom, and sitting-room it soon requires doing up, and for the health and cheerfulness of the occupant once every four or five years is a necessity. On this calculation the number of rooms to be done up yearly is about fifty. Nor is this all; before the war if one of our inmates grew

too feeble to do her cleaning it was easy to procure help; if there was sickness it was not difficult to find some one anxious to get work, and willing for a moderate sum to give the required help; but now the charwoman is almost extinct; the widows have pensions and the wives no longer need to work, and one wonders from where assistance is to come. Let us remember we are keeping our Jubilee and put away anxious thought. The Homes are there; they at least are an accomplished fact, and very proud we are to look back fifty years and realise how much has been done to alleviate the sorrows of age and poverty which Burns aptly described as 'an ill matched pair.'

In these days when the housing problem is so acute how thankful our old friends must feel that they have not a lodging to seek, and to know that their room is not needed by the landlady for a returning soldier. Part of the comfort of the Homes is the fact that the tenancy is permanent. The work is by no means perfect, and we can suggest improvements. A sick bay for our invalids where they can be nursed and tended for a few weeks and return rejuvenated to their own rooms, a small convalescent home in some sheltered spot where rest and extra food would do much to restore health even to the aged are castles in the air, but our Jubilee may help us, and at any rate nineteen Homes are open and filled with aged guests.

CLARA EMILY HARRISON.

THE OLD PARISH SCHOOLS OF SCOTLAND.

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER MACRAE, M.A.

'SIR,' said Dr. Johnson, 'I hate by-ways in education. Education is as well known, and has long been as well known as ever it can be.' In view of all that has been said and written on the subject of education since these words were uttered, how untimely and ridiculous they appear to us to-day. And yet it may be quite possible that the art of education—for true education is an art and not a science—was quite as well understood, and quite as successfully practised, in Dr. Johnson's day as in our day. At all events, even in those days, and for many days before, there were schools in our own country which turned out men who played a profitable and honourable part in all ranks of society and in all the activities of our national life; in fact, the men who laid the foundation of the greatness and power of the British Empire, and contributed in no small measure to the building thereof. Since Dr. Johnson's time, however, for better or for worse, our ideas of education, and especially of educational methods, have undergone a great change. Dr. Johnson and his contemporaries were satisfied with such educational authorities as Solomon and Locke, but we look up to authorities of a very different origin and character. For the best part of quite a century the sole aim of our educationists has been to follow the leadership and realise the ideals of Prussia. Nothing educational has been considered right unless it bore the stamp of having been 'Made in Germany,' and German education was made in Prussia.

But in the end, education, like all other human aims and efforts, must be judged by its fruits. Forty years ago we used to be told it was the schoolmaster that had won the Prussian victories of 1866 and 1870. Here then was an undeniable proof of the effectiveness of his work and method, and henceforth he became the proper example for our own schoolmasters to copy and to follow. But effectiveness may make for evil as well as for good, and we know now that the work of the German schoolmaster is largely responsible for the world war in which we have lately been engaged, as well as for the savage brutality manifested by the Germans in their conduct of it. Judged by its effects on the German character, German

education stands self-condemned before the whole civilised world, and can no longer be regarded as the classical model for other nations to follow. We have been expecting too much from compulsory education, if not indeed from mere mechanical education in every form.

In other days, when schools were less common and attendance at them voluntary, a clever boy sometimes made a very elementary education the first step of a successful and useful career in life. A very limited education gave him an advantage which the entirely uneducated did not possess. His success was then pointed out as a proof of the benefits of education. It was sometimes even believed that a good education was always bound to lead up to a successful career. How clear and irresistible the argument for compulsory education then seemed. But the success which was so often attributed to education was usually due to natural ability, character and industry, and as these qualities were first manifested in overcoming the difficulties in which the education was sometimes acquired, the superficial observer easily came to look upon them as the outcome of school education. But the education, like the career to which it led, was the result of natural ability backed by character. It no doubt helped to bring success, but it was not the real cause of success. Now that the subject of popular education is being once more forced upon our attention, it is interesting, and perhaps instructive, to recall some of the delusive hopes that were raised by the Education Act of 1870. I remember being present at the opening of a newly built London Board-School more than forty years ago. There was a crowded gathering of the local community—parson, minister, tradesman, labourer, and charwoman all democratically huddled up together, and on the platform were about half a dozen men and women who were deservedly well known for their zeal and activity in the cause of social and educational reform. The religious difficulty had been settled, it was believed permanently, by being relegated to a secondary place, with the almost unanimous consent of all parties, and the way was clear for compulsory secular instruction. 'Hang theology,' was the popular educational cry of the day. One speaker prophesied that, as a result of compulsory education, in thirty years half our prisons would be closed, and the other half would be required only for old offenders born too soon to receive the benefits of a compulsory school-board education. There would be few, if any, able-bodied unemployed or unemployables, because compulsory

education would make every one so resourceful and intelligent as to be able to secure a living in the most unpromising circumstances. There would be no dirty, untidy houses, or slatternly mothers, and to confirm this prophecy the speaker mentioned, in the midst of enthusiastic applause, the case of a little girl who, after receiving a few lessons in drawing at a board-school, went home one day and showed her mother how to hang the pictures properly on the wall. The thirty years have now come and gone. The unemployed and the unemployable are still with us. Our prisons are full, and even the juvenile offender has not yet disappeared, while the slatternly mother, with her dirty and untidy home, still flourishes in our midst. The extravagant hopes raised by the early Board-schools of London have not been fulfilled, for the way of salvation does not lie in a Prussianised system of education.

Perhaps there is no other country that owes so much to the schoolmaster as Scotland—no other country to which education has proved so great a boon, and therefore, in our efforts to find solutions for our present-day educational problems, it is quite possible that a careful inquiry into the forces and motives that kept the poor and primitive schools of Scotland at work in the eighteenth and in the first half of the nineteenth centuries might prove quite as helpful and profitable as anything we can learn from the educational aims and methods of Germany. The guidance of wisdom and truth may sometimes be offered to us in humble and homely guise.

The great intellectual movement known as the Revival of Learning in the second half of the fifteenth century extended to Scotland, where it was taken up with considerable enthusiasm and vigour. James IV of Scotland (1488–1513) was himself a well-educated man, and in 1496 the Scots Parliament, with his support, enacted that all men possessing the necessary means should give their sons a good education. There were a few good schools in Scotland even then, to which barons, chiefs, and gentlemen from the remotest parts of the country were invited to send their sons. This many of them seem willingly to have done. But before these well-meant and laudable efforts had time to achieve any great results, the troubles and unrest of the Reformation period began, and two centuries had to elapse before any real attempt was made to establish parish schools. We are often told that John Knox was the great and enlightened educationist who founded the parish schools which, in course of time, enabled Scotland

to become an educated nation. No doubt John Knox, like the other English and Scottish reformers, was deeply appreciative of the benefits of a good education, which he was anxious to bring within reach of his countrymen, poor as well as rich, but he was in his grave for more than a century before any attempt was made to found the parish schools. John Knox died in 1572. The first effective Act for establishing these schools was not passed until 1696, but in the meantime good schools were being gradually established throughout the country. It was in 1696, then, that the Scots Parliament passed an Act to provide that a schoolmaster should be stationed in every parish and a rate levied upon the heritors, that is, the land-owners, to provide the necessary school accommodation and salary, but so great was the poverty and apathy of the people and the indifference and selfishness of the nobles, that the Act came only very slowly into effect; and the minutes of the presbyterial meetings of the eighteenth century record the constant, but futile, efforts of the Church to stir up heritors and magistrates to fulfil their educational obligations. At the middle of the eighteenth century there were still many parishes, even in the south, without any educational provision, where only a few of the common people were able to read and write, and in the Highlands there were no fewer than 175 parishes without school or schoolmaster.

It would be a mistake, however, to think that in all these parishes the people were entirely ignorant. Praiseworthy efforts were constantly made by the people themselves to teach their children to read and write. Sometimes a student on vacation, or perhaps only a poor cripple who could read and write, but was unable to follow any active occupation, was engaged to teach the young people; and when parents and pupils alike were eager to take advantage of every opportunity thus afforded, it is wonderful what good work was often done under the most unpromising circumstances.

But it must not be supposed that the educational difficulties of a parish ended with the establishment of a parish school. On the contrary, the work of the schoolmaster had usually to be done in the face of many disadvantages and difficulties. The schoolroom was usually of the poorest description. It might be any available shelter, from the church to some disused barn or other outhouse. The heritors were enjoined by the Act of Parliament to provide a commodious house for the school, but even Acts of Parliament are sometimes powerless to make men act against their

will, and the schoolmaster had sometimes to hire a shelter of some sort and pay rent for it himself out of his own scanty earnings. Needless to say, the furniture was usually in keeping with the poverty of the building. Sometimes there were neither forms nor desks, so that the pupils had to sit on rushes or straw spread over the floor, and do their writing 'upon the floor lying upon their bellies'![1] The salary of the schoolmaster was a mere starvation pittance, and the heritors were not obliged by the Act of Parliament to provide him with a dwelling-house, so that his lot, as a rule, was one of hopeless poverty. The authorised salary was from 100 to 200 merks (£5 10*s.* to £11), and even this miserable sum he did not always receive, as the heritors sometimes found excuses—such, for instance, as a bad harvest—for refusing to pay the assessment for his salary. At last, in 1802, some relief was afforded by the Schoolmasters' Act, which provided that henceforth the salary should be from 300 to 400 merks (£16 10*s.* to £22), with a house of not less than two rooms, a garden of not less than a quarter of a Scots acre (1¼ rods), or, instead of a garden, two bolls (280 lbs.) of oatmeal. We read that, on the passing of this Act, many of the lairds and of the Scottish members of Parliament were indignant at being required 'to erect palaces for dominies.' Before the passing of this Act the average yearly income of the Scottish schoolmaster was only £13, while that of the ploughman was about £15.

To eke out his scanty living, the schoolmaster was always ready to accept any perquisite that came within his reach. He was often the parish registrar, precentor, clerk to the Kirk Session, and even beadle and grave-digger, but his income from all these offices was often reckoned only in shillings. Within the memory of men whom I have known, one of the yearly events of a school was the cock-fight. On that occasion, all the important people of the neighbourhood assembled at the school, and every pupil who could afford to do so paid a small fee to the schoolmaster and entered a cock for the fight. The 'fugies,' that is the cocks that refused to fight or were beaten, were claimed by the schoolmaster for himself and his family, and this, together with the entry fees, made an appreciable addition both to his purse and to his larder. These entry fees were sometimes equal in amount to the tuition fees of a whole quarter, which, when parents were able to pay, was usually

[1] H. G. Graham, *Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*. This work contains an interesting chapter on education.

one shilling a quarter for each pupil, and two shillings if Latin was taught. But in spite of the poverty and hardship of his lot, the schoolmaster earnestly and honestly endeavoured to do his duty, supported by a sense of the dignity which his own learning gave him, and of the importance of the work in which he was engaged, and which he felt to be above the reach of any earthly reward.

According to present-day ideas, the school-hours were unreasonably long—from eight o'clock in the morning, or even earlier, until six in the evening in summer time, and from sunrise to sunset in the depth of winter. There was a break of an hour or two at midday, and towards the end of the eighteenth century it became customary to have a half-holiday on Saturday. In the towns there were summer holidays of two or three weeks, and country schools broke up for what was called 'the harvest play,' usually as soon as one of the pupils could bring the schoolmaster a perfectly ripe ear of corn. The pupils gradually returned to school as the harvest work got finished and their help on the farms was no longer required. Many of the bigger boys and girls, who had been at work during the summer months, returned to school during the winter, and often continued their winter attendance until they were eighteen or nineteen years of age. In this way many a poor boy qualified himself to enter one of the Universities.

Fuel was provided by the pupils themselves, each of whom was expected to bring a peat or a piece of firewood to school every morning during the winter months. This custom continued in some parts of the Highlands until the Scottish Education Act of 1872 came into force. The method of lighting was equally primitive, and in the early decades of the last century unglazed windows were still common in outlying districts, protection from the weather being given by keeping the windward windows closed while the leeward ones were kept open for light. To these wretched places the children trudged—it might be over long distances, and often barefoot in all sorts of weather—bringing with them a meagre dinner of dry oat or barley cakes, or perhaps only of boiled greens, to do the long and tedious day's lessons, and in many cases to work with an intelligence and a will which opened up a path from poverty to prosperity and perhaps honour also; it might be at home, but it might more likely be somewhere else, or anywhere else from China to Peru.

For a long time past now, we have made the compulsory educa-

tional methods of Prussia and Germany the ideal to aim at, but it may be doubted if education, in its higher and more profitable sense, is a thing that can be imparted by compulsion. When the question of compulsory education for England was being discussed half a century ago, there were thoughtful men among us who maintained that in the end the result of compulsory education would not be to improve or to elevate the character and lives of the people, and most of us are now agreed that the effect of the compulsory enforcement of the most perfect system of education the world has ever known has not been to improve or to elevate the character of the people of Germany, but simply to convert them into the docile slaves of a tyrannical despotism, or into so much 'cannon fodder' for the use of a brutalised caste of men lusting for bloodshed and conquest. In Scotland, on the other hand, the schoolmaster called forth a strong and wholesome spirit of independence and freedom, and the great work of character-uplifting done by him, in spite of unfavourable conditions, has been long and universally acknowledged. For better or for worse, the subject of education is once more under discussion among us, and, that being the case, it may be quite possible that a practical, unbiassed educationist might find something worthy of attention, not indeed in the conditions in which the old Scottish schoolmaster did his work, but in the aim which he set before himself and the spirit in which his work was done.

Nothing could be greater than the difference between the old Scottish and the modern Prussian ideas of education. For the Scottish schoolmaster, whatever his own shortcomings may have been, the one great truth which he could never doubt, and which his conscience would never allow him to forget, was that 'man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever.' The groundwork, therefore, of the education given was religion. Everything else being of secondary importance, the first aim was to teach the child to read the Bible, which not only set forth 'the duty which God requires of man' in this present life, but also opened up the way to life everlasting. The first school-book used was the 'Shorter Catechism' and that was the reason why it used to be, and perhaps still is, published with the alphabet at the beginning of it, and the multiplication table at the end, so that it might be used also for the teaching of arithmetic. As a reading-book, the Catechism was usually followed by one of the Gospels, and then the Book of Proverbs, and it is quite possible that to the influence of the latter

the shrewdness and practical wisdom of the old-fashioned typica Scot, who left his home in search of a career, may have been in some measure due. Religion, English, Writing, and Arithmetic were taught in all schools, while in the burgh schools (that is, the secondary schools of the towns) and in the better-class country schools, Latin, Greek, French, and Mathematics were usually taught also.

In the better schools, Latin was the chief of the secular subjects, and so well was it taught that when boys left school at the age of fourteen or fifteen to go to the University they could write that language with tolerable accuracy. It was probably more like the Latin of George Buchanan than the Latin of Cicero, but how many boys of that age are there to-day, even on the classical side of our public schools, who can do so much? It was a common rule to forbid boys who were learning Latin to speak anything else either in the class-room or in the playground, and the effect of this rule was to give boys such a practical mastery of that language as is rarely, if ever, met with among the schoolboys of to-day. To enable this rule to be enforced, conversation-books, which must have added very considerably to the interest of the work, were used for the instruction of the pupils. 'The Schools Inquiry Commission,' which visited Scotland in 1866, was impressed by the excellence of the Latin teaching.[1] Even then Latin was much less of a dead language among Scottish schoolmasters and their pupils than it is now.

In the Highlands the difficulties of the schoolmaster were increased by the fact that his Gaelic-speaking pupils often came to him quite ignorant of English. His plans for overcoming this difficulty were sometimes vigorous, or even drastic, but usually effective. The use of Gaelic was forbidden both in the class-room and in the playground, and the following instance affords one illustration of the way in which this rule was enforced. At the beginning of the day the schoolmaster handed to one of his pupils a carved piece of wood called the 'tessera.' The holder of the tessera was then to pass it on to the first boy whom he heard talking Gaelic, who, in his turn, would pass it on at the first opportunity to another Gaelic speaker, and so on until the end of the day, when the boy who held the tessera was called out to receive a flogging. He then passed it back to the boy from whom he received it, who

[1] *Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission.*

was duly flogged in his turn, and so on until the tessera found its way back to the original holder.[1] It was a method which would probably not receive the approval of a modern educationist, but it was, none the less, a very effective one, and it is simply astonishing how quickly and how well Gaelic-speaking pupils learned to speak English. It was usually not more than a matter of a few months, whereas it is not an unusual thing in a public school of the present time to find whole forms of pupils, not one of whom can talk or write French after learning that language for three or four years.

It is not an unusual thing to speak of the old Scottish schoolmaster as having been in the habit of making an excessive use of punishment, but as a rule this was not the case. Attendance at school was voluntary, and the older pupils who gave the school its tone knew that they were there for a profitable purpose, with the wish of their parents and often at the cost of parental self-sacrifice. They were therefore willing, if not eager, to turn their attendance to profitable account. They regarded their work with more seriousness than the average schoolboy of to-day does. In these circumstances, then, it was easy for the schoolmaster to command support and respect, and that he usually did. In his youth, Thomas Carlyle was for some time a schoolmaster, and left behind him many traditions of a stern and iron rule; but one of his pupils, who became a well-known public man, used to say that Carlyle did not flog his pupils. He simply withered them with caustic sarcasm, but did not punish them in other ways. There was, however, among them a deeply fixed feeling that if they did provoke him to use the rod it would be something too dreadful for even the bravest boy to face. Of course, ordinary schoolmasters did not possess the forceful personality and character of such a man as Carlyle, but he may be taken, nevertheless, as a type of the best of the Scottish schoolmasters of a hundred years ago. It would seem that from generation to generation old men have always found satisfaction in contrasting the Spartan experiences of their own school-days with the Sybarite school-life of their grandsons; but, recalling my own recollections of a Scottish parish school of many years ago, my surprise is how one man could manage more than a hundred pupils at all stages of advancement from the alphabet to Virgil, and get such good work done by so many of

[1] W. Mackay, *Urquhart and Glenmoriston.*

them with hardly any punishment of any kind, at all events that I can remember!

But the old Scottish schoolmaster's duties did not end with his ordinary weekday work. It was his duty, especially in villages and towns, to assemble his pupils on Sunday morning, conduct them to church, watch over their conduct and catechise them after the service on what they had heard from the minister. Nor did his duties end even there, for he was expected to see that his pupils conducted themselves with propriety for the rest of the day, if, as sometimes happened, careless parents should happen to neglect that duty. In all these Sunday duties, as in his weekday duties also, he always had the whole-hearted support of the better class of parents. With the commencement of the nineteenth century these exacting customs began to fall into abeyance, but there are many Scotsmen still alive who can remember, perhaps with heart-felt gratitude, how much the restraining influence of the 'dominie' was felt on Sunday by his own pupils, and that, too, even after their school-days were ended. What a boon it would be for the big boys and girls of many a present-day country village if, on Sunday afternoon and evening, which is often a poisonous time among them, they felt the moral and religious restraint of some such influence as this?

The conditions under which the old Scottish schoolmaster did his work and the methods he employed would be ruthlessly condemned to-day by the least exacting of H.M. Inspectors. Everything was so very different from the Prussian ideal after which we have so long and so slavishly striven, but which many of us now feel to be largely responsible for the deterioration and brutality of character from which the whole German race is at present suffering. The fact is that true education is something far too subtle to be imparted by compulsion. Compulsory education may make a man into an effective machine for material and worldly purposes; but that knowledge of self, and that consciousness of duty and responsibility, which enable a man to make the most profitable use of his life in the service of his fellow-men and of his God, can grow only in an atmosphere of freedom, and under the fostering care of men with loftier ideals than can be inspired either by compulsory attendance officers or government inspectors. We are sometimes told that, if only we could eliminate the question of religion we might then be able to arrive at a perfect system of practical education. But life always stands in the way of arti-

ficial perfection and mechanical exactness, and it is truly appalling to contemplate how the efforts of an officious Government to reduce things to a perfect system invariably drive the life out of every human activity it touches. The progress made in learning, and the useful account to which that learning was so often turned by the pupils of the old Scottish schoolmaster, were the result not of regularity of attendance on the part of the pupil nor of the visits of Government inspectors, nor yet of the time and labour that the schoolmaster was able to devote to individual teaching, nor to any attractiveness possessed by the circumstances and surroundings in which his teaching was imparted. One cause at least was that in all his efforts he had the whole-hearted support of the parents, who, in the first place, wished their children to be able to read the Bible—in their eyes the most important of all accomplishments. It is not contended for a single moment that all parents, or even the greater number of them, were religious and good and wise, any more than that all pupils were eager to learn, but such parents were sufficiently numerous and influential to cause religion and goodness to be looked upon by all as the true aim of life. This was the faith that was in the schoolmaster also, and it was through the moral force that he brought to bear upon his pupils, by means of the constant exhortation to all the manly and Christian virtues, that formed so prominent a feature of the daily Bible lesson, that his most educative and elevating influence was asserted. The solemn religious earnestness of the Bible lesson was transferred in a very perceptible measure, not only to the other lessons, but in many cases to the ordinary everyday occupations of after-life, and the result was thorough and successful work in many an undertaking, and capacity for responsibility and advancement whenever an opportunity occurred. After all, the most important factors in the work of education are the attitude of the parents, the personality of the schoolmaster, and the religious faith that is in him. It may indeed be quite impossible in these latter days to get back to this educational bedrock of truths which were old long before the days of Dr. Johnson, but the nearer we get to them the better for the future of our children and of our race.

THE TELL-TALE.

AN EXPERIMENT IN SOCIOLOGY.

BY LADY POORE.

THINGS had been going very uncomfortably at the model settlement of Simplicitas in East Downshire. The tendency among its younger inhabitants to do most of the things banned as actively prejudicial or negatively undesirable was developing with alarming rapidity, and a meeting of parents was called to discuss the situation and find a corrective.

For eight years the community had dwelt within a ring-fence of home-made regulations not unduly galling to its senior members, who had sown the few wild oats they possessed before retiring from the world, and to them their mode of life appeared ideally satisfying. But they had ignored, or forgotten, the fact that young people will be young people, and that a flock 'however watched and tended' must produce black sheep, or sports of some description.

There were fifteen families at Simplicitas. They lived in small houses sparsely furnished, and kept no servants. They ate no meat and wore neither shoes nor stockings, braces nor stays. Broad-brimmed hats shaded them in summer, but they went bareheaded for the rest of the year. Their dress was neither ugly nor inconvenient, as colours and materials suited to every season and individual were permitted, and a maximum of freedom was necessarily given to the limbs of both sexes, since all worked on the land. The village farm was co-operative. Even the flowers were grown in one large walled garden, and no cottage had its own flower or vegetable patch. Whatever could be produced by the community was cultivated or manufactured locally, and only the Chief Elder and two other seniors were entrusted with the task of taking saleable articles to the market-town, where they procured all the implements needed in their work, and whatever in the way of food and clothing was deemed essential. The rest of the Simplifiers never passed the junction with the highroad of the lane leading to their village.

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Rachel Fordyce had been the first to rebel.

An errant motor-car full of fashionable people had come to

a full stop in the cul-de-sac of Simplicitas one evening in late June, and, much as the apple of Eden awakened a taste for dress in Eve, a copy of *La Mode Illustrée*, tossed out among the children by a smart lady, had brought to Rachel a feeling of discontent with her clothing.

Haymaking is hot work, and she was tired enough to be cross and captious long before midday on the morrow. Why were she and her companions condemned to go barefooted and bare-handed and clad in linen smocks while worldly folk wore buckled shoes, silk stockings, and long gloves, pearl necklaces, bewitching picture-hats or cunning little motor bonnets, and clinging gowns of opalescent hue and filmy texture? The two men in the car were no better-looking than her father, but there was something about them that took her fancy. If they represented the Wicked World against which she was so frequently warned, from which she was so painstakingly safeguarded, she liked the Wicked World, and to her next neighbour in the hayfield she said as much.

'It was all very well when we were small,' she added, 'but I am nearly eighteen now, and I'm sick of plain-living and high-thinking and farm work and the Chief Elder's discourses. I don't want to go on for ever in this little pocket among the Downs, swimming eternally round and round the same pond like one of our fat white ducks.'

'*I'm* not unhappy,' answered the other girl; 'but then I suppose I am a fat white duck, while you are very likely a swan disguised as a duck. All the same, I should like a pearl necklace and a motor-car and——'

'Less talking there!' cried the Overseer of the Day, who happened to be the Fordyces' neighbour, Adam Cunningham. 'You forget that you are not poor hirelings, but independent maidens privileged to compel the earth to yield her increase by your honest toil. Blest be the Work!'

'Blest be the Work!' rejoined the girls as in duty bound, and then Cunningham, who had an ugly, throaty voice, started what the Simplifiers called 'The Key Song,' to the rudimentary tune of 'The North Wind doth Blow':

'Blest be the Work
That none must shirk.
Happy and free-ee and strong are we.
Far from the haunts of sin and care
Simplicitas brea-eathes a purer air.'

This was taken up by the rest of the workers; by the seniors with enthusiasm, by the others as perfunctorily as was discreet in the hearing of an overseer swift and eager to mark what was done amiss.

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A week or two later the Chief Elder opened proceedings in the meeting-house of Simplicitas.

'My friends,' he said, 'we are faced by a grave danger. Our youths and maidens are eating some poisonous herb, and our own teeth are set on edge. Among them a spirit of unrest manifests itself. The frankness so desirable in the young is giving place to a secretiveness in the highest degree reprehensible. It must be checked at all costs, and I have here what I believe to be the necessary remedy. The late Professor X. Wray, an American scientist of renown, devised and perfected this small instrument, one of almost incredible delicacy, to which he gave the name of philometer or feeling-gauge. It resembles, as you see, a miniature aneroid barometer, but, instead of *Stormy*, *Much Rain*, *Rain*, *Change*, *Fair*, *Set Fair*, and *Very Dry*, you will find upon its dial the words *Loathing*, *Animosity*, *Resentment*, *Indifference*, *Liking*, *Love*, and *Adoration*. No matter what the wearer says or does, the needle will point to the spot upon which his actual feeling at the moment is registered.

'I have to propose that philometers, to be worn compulsorily by the younger generation of this community, be purchased without delay. We shall then be in a position to cope with the danger that threatens us. The smouldering fires of discontent will be quenched by the corrections we shall be in a position to administer; duplicity will be impossible when, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, we shall be able to read the sentiments of our youthful backsliders and deal faithfully with them.'

Amid expressions of assent the Chief Elder resumed his seat, and Bernard Fordyce, Rachel's father, rose to propose an amendment of greater importance than its author imagined, namely, that *every* inhabitant of Simplicitas over the age of three years should be compelled to wear a philometer. No one liked to oppose such an amendment, so it was carried *nem. con.*, since, theoretically, the conscience of each adult in the settlement was as clear as crystal; but among the audience there were not a few to whom it was far from welcome.

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The Chief Elder's proposal and Fordyce's amendment were

duly entered in the statute-book of Simplicitas, but not till September did the philometers arrive, for they were only procurable in the United States. Even there the demand for them had been so small that the makers had ceased to keep them in stock, and those for Simplicitas had to be specially manufactured. There were in all sixty-one of them; fifteen for fathers and mothers, forty-five for girls and boys over three, and one for Grannie.

Grannie was an anachronism, and to some extent an outlaw, who had refused to part from her only daughter, when she was, with her husband, Bernard Fordyce, converted to the doctrines of Simplification, and had accompanied them into exile. The faithful were surprised when she demanded a philometer, for she was known to be unconverted and believed to be unconvertible. In point of fact, she desired to enjoy no unfair advantage.

On the Sunday following their arrival from America the instruments were affixed to the clean smocks of their owners. It would be impossible to give in detail the adventures and discoveries to which each one of the sixty-one gave rise, but these were so remarkable in the Fordyce household alone that they deserve to be chronicled.

At Holdfast Cottage lived Mr. and Mrs. Fordyce, Grannie (properly speaking, Mrs. Campbell), Rachel, and her two young brothers, James and Philip. The bungalow next to theirs belonged to Adam Cunningham, a widower with two children, who desired to marry Rachel Fordyce. Rachel was, however, utterly indisposed to meet his views, which had her father's approval; and the indifference with which she had regarded Adam before the disturbing advent of the car and *La Mode Illustrée* had given place to active dislike before the arrival of the philometers.

The younger of the two men whose 'worldly' looks had pleased her had reappeared not many days later, ostensibly to search for a pet spanner, but hoping in reality to see again the lovely face of Rachel Fordyce, and possibly secure the pleasure of an acquaintance with herself. She was standing outside the cottage when Somers reached the settlement, and to her the young man addressed an inquiry about the missing spanner. No one to Rachel's knowledge had seen it, but she would make sure, and presently her father came out and, acting on a natural impulse of hospitality which overbore his habitual mistrust of worldlings, invited the stranger to enter and partake of the evening meal to which his family were on the point of sitting down. Mr. Fordyce was a fine-looking man,

reminding the intruder of some stained-glass apostle as he stood in the doorway bareheaded and barelegged in his tunic of dark blue linen, and David Somers thought himself lucky beyond all anticipation when he took his place at the well-scrubbed tea-table between Mrs. Fordyce and her daughter. Grannie, the anachronism, was dressed as the old ladies of David's world were dressed, but the rest of the *mise en scène* had an archaic simplicity in keeping with the manners and speech of his host. David, indeed, was conscious of his own inadequacy, for he belonged to a section of society which regards any *argot*, whether of the public schoolboy, the East-ender, or the Chinese coolie, as more expressive and satisfying than the English of Shakespeare or Stevenson. For the first time he felt the unsuitability and limitations of his vocabulary, and eliminated with difficulty the stock adjectives, topping, rotten, and rocky, from his halting sentences. But his face was eloquent. It was honest and kind as well as handsome, and, though these aliens surprised him, he had no mind to make fun of their acquired simplicity. His host and hostess on their side found him 'a pleasing youth,' little tainted by contact with the Wicked World from which they had fled; but it was Grannie who asked him to come again and sighed when the boy had gone. David reminded her of the normal life she had abandoned for her daughter's sake, and the more she thought the more heartily she wished that her cherished granddaughter had never been promised to the saturnine enthusiast Adam Cunningham—one whose poor digestion almost as much as his faithless wife, now dead, had driven him to seek health and religion in a colony of labourers. David Somers, she felt, would have been a husband worthy of the child, and when he appeared with pertinacious regularity every Sunday she welcomed him for Rachel's sake as much as her own. This was naughty of Grannie, but she was an unregenerate old lady, tender-hearted and romantic, and often inwardly rebellious.

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Nearly all the philometer wearers were present in the meeting-house by ten o'clock on the September Sunday morning following the arrival of the instruments from America, but in the three preceding hours these had wrought havoc among their owners. Grannie, alone of the party at Holdfast Cottage, had come so far triumphantly through the ordeal. Yet even she might fall, for she was quick of thought and, save in the matter of Rachel's godless admirer, honest as the day.

Rachel's tell-tale had betrayed her very early. Fresh from her cold tub and arrayed in a pale-blue smock girdled with Grannie's latest gift, a wide ribbon sash, she had been standing in the verandah for a few minutes before breakfast when Cunningham emerged from his bungalow. With eyes full of admiration he bade his neighbour good morning, and as he leaned on the verandah rail, not more than a couple of feet from Rachel, the girl marked with deep annoyance the jump his philometer's needle made to *Adoration*. She drew back blushing and frowning. She could not in his presence consult the instrument she wore, but was conscious that it must register the antipathy she felt for the man. 'Rachel,' called Grannie from the kitchen, and at the sound of a voice so dear to her the needle flicked up from *Loathing* to *Love*. Cunningham saw it and ground his teeth as he turned away.

Breakfast that morning at Holdfast Cottage was an uncomfortable meal. A round table affords too many opportunities for philometric observation, and few people over the age of twelve are at their best by breakfast time. The bonds of brotherhood are strained, filial devotion is not always apparent, and there is often a slump in conjugal affection in a household where the pangs of hunger are unmitigated by a soothing, if pernicious, cup of early morning tea. Mrs. Fordyce was the only one of the party who ate with appetite, and this was due to her short sight. Had she been able to perceive her husband's philometer when she omitted to give him a second lump of sugar in his coffee she would have been aghast. Grannie, however, observed and trembled. For the vagaries of her own feeling-gauge she cared nothing for the moment, but if a household storm were impending she must to the best of her powers limit its area of devastation. 'Come, children,' she cried, when the meal was over—'come and help me to get some flowers for the dinner table. We shall have time before Meeting if we go now.'

Mrs. Fordyce was a pretty and gentle creature, secure of her husband's affection and apt to dwell with a certain complacency on her own need for consideration, her own incapacity, mental and physical, for such occupations as might unduly vex or fatigue her. Her mother, husband, and daughter combined to shield her from vexation and spare her fatigue, and they never let her discover that she was actually as unessential to her household as a figure-head is to a ship; never let her dream but that her husband

would die of a broken heart in time to be buried along with her should she predecease him. She did not, however, contemplate suttee should he die first. 'Bernard,' she said, when they were alone and he was collecting the breakfast gear before washing up, 'there is a black thread on your smock. No, not there. I'll take it off'; and with her shortsighted eyes very close to the front of his smock she picked off the offending thread. Unluckily she paused and glanced at his philometer. The needle stood at *Indifference*. With a little shriek she drew back, pressed one hand to her heart, and staggered to a seat. 'Bernard!' she moaned. 'Say it isn't true!' 'What isn't true?' he asked in amazement, and between choking sighs and rending sobs his wife gasped out, 'You *can't* be indifferent to me.' 'Of course I am not, dearest,' he answered stoutly, but on lifting his pendant tell-tale he saw what it announced, and with a 'd—n the beastly thing,' caught up the tray of crockery and fled to the kitchen. Shocked by his violent language and bitterly hurt by his desertion, Mrs. Fordyce collapsed afresh, and when Grannie and the young people returned they found her lying senseless on the floor.

'You must go to Meeting with father,' said Grannie to Rachel when Mrs. Fordyce had been restored and put to bed. 'He is terribly upset, but he's better out of the house just now.' So to Meeting went Bernard with his three children, much subdued and heartily wishing that Professor X. Wray had died before instead of after inventing the disturbing novelty that threatened to wreck the peace of a once happy home. They were glad to be the last to arrive, for once the congregation was safely seated in rows one behind the other a welcome period of peace was secured, and the Chief Elder and his assistant were luckily so far removed from their flock that no fresh disclosures respecting the feelings of anyone were for the time possible.

When Meeting was over, so hurried a dispersal took place that before the two lay-priests had resumed their smocks every member of their congregation had vanished. They looked at one another, and then the gaze of each fell to the philometer his companion was wearing. *Resentment* was simultaneously indicated, and silent and humiliated they went their separate ways, since this feeling was theoretically *tapu* at Simplicitas, and Professor Wray had unfortunately omitted to mark Righteous Indignation on the dial of his invention.

A Bible lesson at home followed public worship, and Fordyce

gathered his children round him in the living room to read with them a portion of Scripture, but his mind wandered from the subject, and he dared not reprove the young folk for their indifference lest his own should be equally apparent to them. On the plea of anxiety to see how their mother was, Fordyce omitted the catechising which usually followed the reading; Rachel went to the kitchen, and the boys meekly accepted the unaccustomed task of arranging flowers for the dinner-table. It was a much subdued party that assembled for the midday meal. All were now more sad than cross. No one ate with appetite, and no one cared to talk. Over the inevitable washing up, distasteful to Rachel since discontent with the Simple Life had assailed her, grandmother and granddaughter unburdened their minds.

'Life will become unbearable for some of us if this system is persisted in. The Inquisition could hardly have been worse,' said Grannie.

'And what punishments are we to be given if our philometers show we indulge in evil passions?' asked Rachel.

'That I cannot say; but,' Grannie added, with a twinkle in her shrewd blue eye, 'I'm thinking that the old proverb about the pot and the kettle will come in usefully when justice is being administered.'

'Do you mean to say that the Elders themselves will be betrayed by their philometers?'

'I haven't a doubt of it, my dear. They're quite human really, only they have forgotten it.'

Rachel clapped her wet hands and laughed, but a sharp rap on the house door cut short her mirth, and after wiping her hands she ran to see who knocked. It was David Somers, and Rachel, forgetting all about her philometer, greeted him with a warmth that sent the incriminating needle dancing.

'How do you do?' said David. 'Why, what a fine new watch you've got. Have you had a birthday without telling me?' The girl placed her hand over the 'watch' in time, she fondly hoped, to hide what it must be shamelessly announcing. 'No,' she said, reddening, 'not a birthday. Please come in and see Grannie. Mother's not very well to-day.' David's quick eye had, however, marked the phenomenon and, marvelling considerably, he followed Rachel into the house. As she went she deliberately, and most improperly, unhooked her treacherous philometer and replaced it face inwards.

Grannie was now very gay. She felt sure there was a good time coming in spite of her poor daughter's collapse and the general discomfiture of her family. The unintentional *suppressio veri* which had been gradually poisoning the air of Simplicitas and become in the children's eyes a *suggestio falsi* would, she hoped, be exploded by the introduction of the tell-tale, and manufactured simplicity yield to good human common sense. For some time she had been conscious of discontent among the children and unrest among the parents. Religion had become religiosity and sanctity sanctimoniousness for the majority of the Simplifiers. That she alone of all the adult inhabitants was sincere she never dreamt of assuming, but she knew that hypocrisy was spreading. She saw and feared its effects, and looked forward with hope to the clearing of the spiritual atmosphere around her, even though this should be secured by so great a storm as would blow the settlement itself to fragments.

She welcomed David's visit, but she would not forgo her duty as a chaperon, and this was fortunate, for Rachel could not just then have borne to be left *tête-à-tête* with the young man. Her heart beneath the reversed philometer was beating fast, and she was grateful to Grannie for the support her company afforded. Then her father came heavily down from his wife's room and sat in oppressive silence while Grannie and David talked. Fordyce's self-esteem had received a wound. That he had been unconscious of the growth of spiritual smugness disturbed him seriously. He could have sworn until that morning that he had never failed in devotion to his wife for one instant, never been otherwise than tender, appreciative, and forgiving. But his philometer had decided otherwise, and if he had been mistaken with regard to his attitude to his cherished wife, how much more might he not have sinned against the boys, towards whom he had believed himself everything a parent should be? The impatience he had sometimes felt with Grannie's mundane tendencies had not, perchance, been the outcome of righteous zeal, and his consent to Rachel's marriage with Cunningham might have been dictated by a selfish wish to have his beloved daughter safely domiciled within a stone's throw of Holdfast Cottage. He was, indeed, so shaken by the scene with his wife after breakfast and so little reassured by his subsequent talk with her, that his own judgment, based on an artificial or, at least, acquired code of morality, began to appear to him untrustworthy, the beaten earth of fine sentiments constantly repeated

was crumbling beneath the feet he had thought fixed upon a rock of imperishable principle. And yet his wife's philometer had stood at *Love* when he had glanced at it before leaving her room. Of the strength of her affection for him he had no doubt. It had never struck him that it was only the affection of a cat for the hand that feeds and strokes it. His assurances that the instrument he was wearing was not properly adjusted had satisfied her—for the moment. How would it be when this pious fraud was unmasked? He was a hypocrite and a liar after eight years of simplification!

Meanwhile Rachel looked shyly happy, Grannie animated and smiling, and their guest was in the highest spirits. When, after a long sitting, David took his leave Grannie proposed to accompany him to the boundary, and as Bernard Fordyce shook hands with him he noticed and admitted to himself that the young man's expression was steady and straightforward, quite unlike the furtive glance of Cunningham's button-hole eyes. He had noticed also that Rachel's philometer was hanging wrong side out, and as he turned to go into the house he wondered what this might portend, and whether he had dealt justly by his daughter in promising her to the widower.

The others departed talking cheerfully as they went, for Rachel was now quite sure David could not have noticed the behaviour of her philometer on his arrival. He could not, she believed, be so perfectly at his ease with her had he done so (it had not struck her that David had asked no further questions about the philometers all the party were wearing), and when Grannie protested she was tired and would sit by the roadside while their guest and her granddaughter went as far as the boundary, the girl was glad enough to walk on with him for the few hundred yards that remained.

'Will you let me come again?' asked David when they parted. The personal note surprised his companion, and, with eyes averted and bare brown toes pressed nervously into the dusty grass of the wayside, she said 'Why not?'

'Because I don't want to come unless you like me to come.'

'You're always welcome,' said Rachel courageously, though her cheeks grew hot; and the young man, suddenly ashamed of his importunity, raised his hat and, without a second look, pursued his way.

When Rachel rejoined her grandmother she found the old lady deep in conversation with the Chief Elder. 'Go home without me,

my dear,' said Grannie, and Rachel, instantly aware that trouble was brewing, hurried back to the cottage.

The Chief Elder's philometer was becoming a nuisance. At this moment it irked him particularly, since Grannie's eyes were of the sort that see best at conversational range. Besides she had, as an unbeliever, an unfair advantage over him. His infallibility was not proof against the weapons of so acute a worldling.

'Can you tell me, Mrs. Campbell,' he began, 'that you have not encouraged the young Philistine with whom Rachel has been walking to invade the sanctity of our Retreat?'

'I *have* encouraged him,' answered Grannie calmly, 'and David is an inappropriate name for a Philistine.'

The Chief Elder disregarded the latter piece of information as irrelevant. 'Yet you knew her father's intention, approved by me, to give her in marriage to Brother Cunningham?'

'I knew it, but I did not concur in it.'

The Chief Elder was conscious of a drop in his philometer, and was the more provoked to wrath because the breeze had blown a bit of Grannie's muslin fichu across the face of hers.

'Do you know, Madam, that I have power to expel you from Simplicitas?'

'My daughter and I are as inseparable as Ruth and Naomi,' answered Grannie. 'If I go, she goes.'

'And you would not shrink from sowing discord in this happy settlement?'

'I do not call it happy. It is full of discontent. Why did you order the philometers if you believed it happy?'

'To disperse a cloud of doubt which temporarily obscured the purity of its atmosphere.'

'And you believe your experiment will succeed?'

'We are wandering from the point. I ask you to—nay, I *insist* that you should—discontinue your association with the worldling Somers.'

'You have no authority over me,' answered Grannie bravely, 'and you are, in any case, unfitted to be Dictator to this settlement. Look at your philometer! It says *Animosity*. Whom do you hate, O most virtuous of men?'

'It is a reflection of your own,' hazarded the Chief Elder.

'Of mine? Let us see. . . . Why, my instrument marks *Indifference*!'

'Pshaw!' exclaimed the Chief Elder impolitely, and took up his staff to go.

'Don't be cross,' said Grannie. 'You're only human after all, just like the rest of us. But you should have taken off your halo before you put on your philometer.'

Things had gone from bad to worse during Rachel's absence, for Mrs. Fordyce had taken it into her head to exchange her own philometer for that of her husband, rashly removed and laid upon the table in her bedroom while he exchanged his Sunday smock for the one in which he was to milk the cows. Before starting he came back to pin on the instrument and kiss his wife. She seized the philometer as he stooped over her, perceived that it rose no higher than *Liking*, released it, and turned her face to the wall. No excuses or prevarications would now suffice to reassure her. It was idle to suggest that her instrument was also inaccurate, and as the lowing cows could not wait indefinitely Fordyce abandoned the situation as hopeless, and left his unhappy wife in Rachel's care. Then Grannie returned, and another painful scene ensued. But obstinacy is the invincible weapon of the weak, and no persuasions could shake Mrs. Fordyce's decision to leave her husband on the morrow. Grannie should take her away somewhere, to the Italian Lakes for choice. She had always longed to visit them, and dear Rachel should come too. The boys (who would be troublesome travellers) could stay with their father, as she desired to be 'quite fair' to him.

In vain Bernard protested; the Chief Elder was called in to veto Mrs. Fordyce's departure without success, and away went the women of three generations from the haven of Holdfast Cottage and out into the Wicked World.

Grannie's balance at her bankers was ample, and her investments had done well since her retirement to Simplicitas, so the travellers shopped riotously in London and travelled thence slowly and luxuriously to Cadenabbia. Rachel naturally rejoiced in her pretty new clothes, but Mrs. Fordyce permitted herself a positive orgy in silks and laces, feathers and furbelows, and her indulgent mother sympathised with so inevitable an outbreak; but she was pained to see how completely her daughter had put poor Bernard and the boys out of her mind, and wondered what might be the sequel to this severance.

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On the Sunday following the departure of the three ladies of

Holdfast Cottage, David was met at the boundary by a menacing deputation of Elders, including Cunningham, who forbade the young man to enter their precincts, but gave no reason for this prohibition and answered none of his inquiries. Impotently raging he departed, his natural desire to punish the Simplifiers by reporting them to the police outweighed by the fear that he might bring trouble on Rachel and Grannie, if, indeed, a refusal to admit him to Simplicitas were legally unjustifiable. He knew, too, that he had been specially favoured, for it was very rarely that a worldling, other than the health-officer from Greychurch, the school-inspector, and the tax-collector penetrated the settlement.

Twice in the course of the following week David wrote to Grannie, and when both letters had been returned to him he packed up his rods and went home to Yorkshire, puzzled and sick at heart. Only to Grannie had he mentioned that he was a soldier home from India on long leave and spending part of it in cottage lodgings at Greychurch where the trout fishing was celebrated; and Grannie had advised him to say nothing of his calling in a settlement where soldiers were termed 'hired assassins' but fishermen well thought of. To Grannie he had also confided that he was not very happy at home. His father had married again while David was still at school, and his second wife was not only jealous of David's seniority to her two boys, but jealous of her husband's affection for him. Peace could best be secured by his absence, and the trout fishing at Greychurch, which had led to his meeting Rachel, had been in reality a pretext for leaving home for a while.

If David was nonplussed by the severance of all relations with Holdfast Cottage, Rachel was much troubled by the breaking off of a friendship which her philometer had regarded so seriously. Grannie, who had the power to resume the connection, since a book of social reference accessible in London had furnished her with David's address and status, neither enlightened her granddaughter nor yet wrote to David. She told herself that Rachel's unexpected opportunity of seeing something of the world must not be wasted. If her regard for David should survive a few months of foreign travel, with the education and experience this would afford to a girl brought up in a backwater, the acquaintance could be renewed. Meanwhile David must wait.

When autumn turned to winter the travellers moved on to Rome. There Grannie found old friends who proved useful in securing for her party an introduction to all that was best in the cosmopolitan

society of the capital, and Rachel's beauty and charm gained admirers of many nationalities.

David, meanwhile, was shooting partridges and pheasants in Yorkshire, and, though he could not but blame his father for allowing his wife to make herself habitually unpleasant, he was sorry for the old man and stayed on at Bilby Hall through the darkening days of autumn. Then, when a black frost set in and Mrs. Somers' temper grew as black and bitter as the frost, it was not surprising that David should decide to cut short his time in England so as to spend a fortnight in Italy on his way back to India. But to both himself and Grannie it was very surprising indeed that he and she should meet in Rome on the morning following his arrival. It was impossible to talk at ease in the Piazza di Spagna, where Grannie was buying flowers, so they went up to the Pincio and established themselves in comfort beneath the shade of a big ilex before unburdening their minds of anything but the profound amazement the encounter had caused them.

'Have you given up Simplicitas?' was David's first question.

'For a time, yes; probably for good.'

'But your daughter . . . and the others?'

'Oh, I have not left my daughter behind. She and Rachel are both with me. You will hardly recognise the child in her worldly garments.' David turned a glowing face towards her.

'Of *course* I shall,' he said indignantly. 'I'd recognise her if she wore a yashmak. How does she like the Wicked World?'

'Loves it, all but the boots and shoes and gloves it requires her to wear; and the Wicked World loves her.'

'Of course it does,' said the young man with a sigh. 'Mrs. Campbell, do you think, *on your honour*, she could have come to care for me if she had seen nobody else?'

'I am sure of it,' said Grannie frankly. 'But now, if you want to win her you may have to fight for her. And there's another very important point. How am I to be sure that you are a desirable and fairly eligible *parti*? I have no right to encourage you to propose to Rachel until I know more about your circumstances.'

'Of course not, but luckily I can give you a "reference," for I fell into the arms of an old friend of my father's when I arrived at the "Continental" last night. Perhaps you know him—the Dean of Grimthorpe?'

'Why, I knew him when he was a curate, and we've been meeting almost every day for the last fortnight! I shall see him this after-

noon, and as soon as I am satisfied that everything is as it should be, I'll ring you up. With the Dean for your sponsor and myself for your friend (though I shall not say a word on your behalf unless the child confides in me), I think your chances are good. But you must be brave as well as wise, for Rachel has a host of adorers, and you have only a fortnight in which to show yourself the best man among them. Still, if things turn out as you and I hope, you may go back to India easy in your mind. Being engaged for a couple of years wouldn't hurt either of you; and I should like to see India before I die,' concluded the old lady with a benevolent smile.

David caught her hand and squeezed it hard. 'What rivals have I?' he asked.

'Plenty, but I don't for a moment think Rachel's heart is engaged. If I did, I wouldn't be on your side.'

'Thank God for that! I'll do my darnedest. Now, please tell me all about your emancipation.'

'It's rather a sad story. The introduction of those philometers, the round things like little barometers you saw us all wearing the last time you came to Simplicitas, played havoc with the settlement, for everyone could see what everyone else was feeling. My daughter was half-crazy when she found her husband's affection for her was not just what it had been twenty years ago, and there was nothing for it but to come away. Poor Bernard was heart-broken, and it has been miserably uncomfortable for him and the boys ever since. But a most astonishing piece of news reached me yesterday. Of course the settlement was turned upside down by the revelations of the philometers. People grew so nervous and suspicious after a while that they petitioned the Chief Elder to repeal the law obliging everyone above three years of age to wear the things. But he refused, most unwisely as it turned out, for his own philometer has brought about his fall. Did you notice a very pretty fair woman, tall and slight, when you were with us one day at Holdfast Cottage? She passed by when we were all on the verandah and stared rather hard at you?'

'Yes; I do remember.'

'Well, the Chief Elder met this Mrs. Spence coming back one evening from the market-garden where she and her husband had been working, and though the Chief Elder was hurrying past, the husband stopped him to ask if he had heard of a new kind of plough advertised in the *Downshire Farmer*, the only newspaper Simplicitas

reads. Mr. Spence was on one side of him and Mrs. Spence on the other, and the Chief Elder's philometer ran up to *Love* while they were talking about the plough! Obviously it was neither the plough nor the husband that had affected the instrument, and Mr. Spence simply went for the Chief Elder and dared him to deny his guilt. As for the lady's philometer it showed *Liking* instead of *Resentment* (which would have been the proper thing), and that finished it. There was a desperate altercation, and an indignation meeting was held next day at which everyone but the Chief Elder was present, for, as soon as he knew the others were all shut up in the meeting-house, he bolted, and no one either knows or cares where he is, unless it is Mrs. Spence. It will ruin Simplicitas, but I'm not a bit sorry for that, and I have just written to Bernard begging him to come and join us here as soon as he and the boys can get decent clothes. I am confident that, properly dressed and without a philometer, my son-in-law will very soon recapture his wife's affections.'

'Well,' said David thoughtfully, 'I'm . . . blowed if I can picture the Chief Elder with his long grey beard and his great round spectacles as a hero of romance.'

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'Is that you, David? . . . This is Grannie speaking. . . . You have my blessing and the Dean's too. Go in and win.'

David won.

THE GENIUS BY THE THRESHOLD.

It is comforting to think that one may not be half such a fool when asleep. Lamb's elderly friend used to ask the stripling suspected of poetic leanings: 'Young man, what sort of dreams have you?' Poetic and dramatic dreams need not imply a Poet or a Dramatist in the waking self; yet if we canvass our own and our friends' dreams, the odds are we will find a poet in the sleeping consciousness. Lamb was probably modest for the sake of an argument when he said that he could not muster a fiddle or raise the ghost of a fish-wife.

For simplicity's sake let us call the gross, unintelligent, supraliminal, waking self, Number One, and the subliminal self, the consciousness sleeping beneath the threshold, the inspiration of our spiritual adventures in dreamland, Number Two. It is common in the relation of his dreams for Number One to parade this little genius in motley. But the truth is Number One, who may think himself very wide awake, is often a dull, prosaic fellow, while his Number Two is an artist. The supraliminal booby cannot follow his dreaming inmate, and being hopelessly at sea, comforts himself that what he cannot understand must be rubbish. Number Two thinks in analogies, in wide figurative sweeps. Number One labours behind him like a child trying to construe a monologue of Browning, unable to follow the poet's swift thought as it leaps from promontory to promontory, dismayed at the ellipses, his vision too narrow to bridge them.

Number One discovers this very slowly. Much that he learns is communicated to him by Number Two in those brief moments of meeting by the threshold. Gradually he comes to know that Number Two moves in worlds not realised, where image and fact are blended like mind and matter in the physical universe. It is his own supraliminal casuistry, his inability to look at more than one thing at a time, his clinging to the particular, his shrinking from the infinite, that hobbles his fancy. If he could hunt with Number Two and keep his five wits all the time, there is nothing he might not accomplish. But he returns from his shadowy adventures with the vaguest idea of their significance. Number Two leaves him at the door with a word or gesture which haunts the waking consciousness and slips away.

Many people have the habit of dreaming double—of two things at once, or in quick alternation as if they were the same thing. There is another kind of figurative dreaming akin to this, a subtle parallelism in which Number Two does not dream in metaphor of two things at the same time. He dreams in simile, so to speak. He sees the image of the thought that is in Number One's keeping. It is not the things Number One has actually seen with the eye or the mind that come up in sleep, but waves of perception or emotion suggested by them, hope, pity, or fear, like a bar of music set to a different key. Or it may be a series of impressions, monotony, climax, or bathos, or the pitch of sensation, ascending or descending, communicated in one medium, rendered in another. Some hint has glided imperceptibly under the threshold during the day, and at night Number Two will be at work on it. He is given the thread, but he is too much of an artist to weave the same pattern. He will paraphrase the idea or the impression, glance at the emotion, play a fugue on it.

Riding dreamily into an old Punjab city, Number One sees a lean sweet-seller sitting on a parapet of a bridge, with his scales and his single tray of sticky yellow molasses—he sells them at three for a farthing—glistening under a canopy of flies. A wave of pity is communicated to Number One which vibrates through to Number Two, who repeats the note unheard. He is still repeating it at midnight, when Number One is awaked by the barking of a dog. When the summons comes to Number Two to evacuate, he is in a long low upstairs *atelier*, full of coloured stuff hung on lines all round the room. There is a pale, strained-looking woman in the centre, who is not working at the time, but who works at all other times. The coloured fabrics are remnants of Eurasians' stockings—they did in fact, become Eurasians' stockings while Number Two was looking at them—and they had to be made into trimming for Eurasians' hats, and the pale, strained-looking lady was paid fourpence for the hundred. It is not the sweet-seller and scales that recur; it is the impression of a particular kind of poverty and servitude. Number One is literal and prosy; he could not see a parallelism. But Number Two is an artist; he will vary the theme for you from supper-time to cock-crow.

One night Number One had been sitting up late playing Bridge, and holding bad hands. When he fell asleep Number Two played variations on the theme of disappointment. Number One had held three Yarboroughs, Number Two was collecting wild flowers

in a strange forest and held a blade of knot-grass in his hand, symbol of sterility, the most niggard herb that grows, with perhaps ten or twelve bracts detached along the stalks. Thirteen, the suit-number, would have made the simile exact, but dreams are not so specific. The weed stood, at a glance, for ostentatious poverty. The waking consciousness had this from Number Two as he slipped away.

If we compare dreams with the waking thoughts of those who dream, it would seem that the creative faculty exists only in sleep. I have a friend who is ordinarily untroubled with the visionary gleam. He woke one morning and found himself screwed up in a ball on his pillow, his head communing with his knees. Number One had supped unwisely; Number Two rode the blast; he was swept through epic adventures; he drew a girdle round the earth. In Pekin he put up in a small inn kept by the Empress of China, and sallying out, came on a strange scene. He saw a parade-ground marked out with pegs and ropes, and a squad of male-factors bound tightly to stakes driven into the earth, their brows fast on the sod, their limbs doubled up like trussed fowls,—Number One had been carving that night—and on the green plain not a hundred yards off, a squadron of cavalry with bright lances and swords, who, in a moment, were to ride at them man for man and stick them, and cut off their heads as they galloped past. Number Two was the only witness of the scene. He looked at the victims over a rope, and horror entered his soul. Then he caught the accusing eye of one of them, a kind of sexless Cerberus and Medusa in one. It would have been all right if he had not looked, but somehow the glance established his complicity in the agony that was being prepared, and at the same time it loosened the fetters of the one who had seen him. Number Two did not wait to see the cords fall off, or the trussed Celestial gather up his limbs and straighten himself for pursuit, but he turned and ran, without looking back, as hard as his legs could carry him to the small inn kept by the Empress of China.

He met the Empress on the rickety wooden stairs and told her his plight, feeling the breath of the assassin on his neck.

'Go to your room and hide yourself in your bed,' she said.

'But he will follow and kill me. He is just behind.'

'Get between the sheets quickly,' she said, 'and pretend that you are three bottles of wine.'

As Number Two obeyed, pantingly, he heard the pursuer's

step on the stair. The door burst open, the assassin stood over him, his naked sword in his hand, his face distorted with blood-thirstiness and hate. He uttered a deep guttural, vengeful 'Ah!' and Number Two knew that his ghost was sped.

But the Empress of China had followed the man up to the room, and stood by his elbow.

'What are you doing?' she asked quietly. 'That is three bottles of wine.'

Number Two shut his eyes and held his breath, and kept quite still, hoping faintly, but prepared for the end.

'So it is!' the assassin said.

Then the phenomenon called waking took place, and the Philistine, Number One, reviewed the adventure. His two knees and his head communing on the pillow were the three bottles of wine.

'What an imagination you must have!' I said when he told me the dream.

'Imagination! Lobster!'

Admitted that it was lobster. I make my bow all the more deeply to Number Two.

Another friend, who is neither poetical nor given to strong drink or drugs, dreamt that he was in an old-world hostelry in Norfolk, during the first month of the war, and he heard the county regiment march past at night to the beat of muffled drums. He went to the window and saw them pass underneath in the wet, dimly-lighted street. Some were very old, but not all. Some had uniforms and overcoats and some not. The few faces he saw were white and absent-minded. He asked a man by his side who they were.

'Why, they're the regiment,' he said. 'They're called out.' And he looked out of the window indifferently.

'But why are they so old?'

The man looked at Number Two, puzzled, as if he had said something foolish.

'Why, of course. They are the dead of the regiment. They always go first when the regiment is called out.'

And Number Two knew that the dull footsteps he could hear passing away were the ghosts of all who had fallen in battle since the ——th were enrolled.

My friend had not read Francis Doyle's 'The Return of the Guards':

'On, on, through wild and wondrous regions
Echoed their iron tread,
Whilst voices old before them rolled:
"Make way for Alma's dead."'

Once when I had been seeing a great deal of a regiment in the Indian Army I dreamt a long metaphorical Bridge dream, in which a group of personified card-values went through their struggles in the flesh. I had not learnt Auction Bridge then. Oddly enough, my dreams after my first lesson were symbolical. The dealer declared 'Five Clubs, Muhammadans.' The second to call made it 'Four Hearts, Sikhs,' and I was thinking of making a 'Spade, Hindu,' declaration, when my instructor advised me to declare 'No Trumps,' on the principle that a regiment of mixed companies was safer in case of a mutiny than a Class regiment made up of men of the same race and religion.

The muddle of dreams, their mixed sense and absurdity is due to the poverty of material Number Two is given to work with. He is wonderful at design, he will weave you a pattern of floating gossamer threads. His dream-tapestry and friezes are as far beyond the range of Number One as Bayeux and the Parthenon. The difficulty is, that he is given so few images at a time. And he is baulked by what psychologists call Dissociation. Not only are the casual detached images that are presented to him often insufficient, but whole faculties and avenues of perception are closed at once. And that is why the waking consciousness reviewing subliminal work often feels himself superior. But the airs Number One gives himself over Number Two are like the sneers of the Philistine, whose walls are hung with lithographic prints, when he is asked to admire the visualisation of the Infinite in Chinese Art.

To Number Two things and people are often merely signs, counters, personified values, pips to score with. Smith need not stand for the individual known to Number One; he may represent a condition, or state, or, if there are not enough counters to go round, two states at once. Hence the composite personality of dreams. One may be 'Grand heresiarch' and '*malleus hereticorum*.' Number Two can take a lady to the theatre and keep her by his side, and watch her act on the stage at the same time. His dream-Smith may represent the desire to buy, and the desire to sell at once. If so, Number Two will not think it strange when Smith

asks him to buy something for him at his own auction because he happens to live near.

It is the impinging of the two Smiths, or the two Smith-values, that Number One does not understand. He does not see that his other Self can inform his plastic clay with any faculty he chooses, as a child playing invests a doll or a tin soldier, or another child, with a special function for the moment. Number Two *is* a child in the sense in which all geniuses are children.

Resolve your dreams into their constituent parts if you want to see him at work. Trace each image to its source. You will see of what threads his stuff is woven. You must begin at the moment of waking and close your mind to all else, or Number One will intervene with his supraliminal baubles and break the spell.

Number One lives in an age of formula and reason, a dry, profane, literal, ratiocinative age. Number Two harks back to an age of revelation. His impressions are more primitive. And does not that mean more initiated, imaginative, elusive of mere definition, susceptible to a greater number of suggestions at the same time which the mind can assimilate instinctively without the halting prose of logic or matter of fact deduction?

One hot weather in India Number One was going home to his fire-pit in the plains after the relief of a day or two at Simla. He woke up hearing Number Two repeat: 'I hope they have not cut off the hand of my angel.' That was the prayer on the lips of Number Two, and the hope was that the electric current might not be cut off at his house in H——.

But why angel? That decent English body, Number One, has no truck with such metaphors. He would as soon dine in carpet-slippers as parade himself alone or in company in this mental undress. But for many days the pain of heat and thirst and drought had sunk through to the subconscious self, who knows no traditions, until the bright light hanging from the beams, and in the darkness the whirring wings and sparks of the fan above his bed, must have become associated—unknown to Number One—with some high guardian spirit.

And the hand? Was Number Two confusing the hand of the angel with the hand that evoked the angel? Number One knew at once when he was called into being that the hand symbolised the switchboard which was nailed roughly on the wall when he left the house, the wires spreading out like tendons from a wrist-like point, the installation being incomplete and uncertain. If

the head of the angel was in the high lighted roof above the rushing wings, the hand would be low down by the door. If the current were cut off the hand would be maimed, the tendons limp and inert. No switching of brass knobs would revive the strange protective being known to Number Two.

Number One knew him only as a mechanism, an application of some latent energy. For the poetry of Number Two is bald prose to Number One, or worse. His images need his own vision. They lose by translation, like Chaucer or the Psalms in paraphrase, or fresh shells taken from the sea.

Even in his workaday moments Number Two is often misunderstood. In another dream he is watching an unknown man fumbling with an engine, when the stranger looks up and asks him to explain its mechanism to the bystanders; at which he is constrained to say:

'My help will be discounted by the consequations attendant upon my ignorance.'

While he is delivering this portentous sentence Number One is called into being by a sudden noise in the room. The waking consciousness catches the last words of the sleeping consciousness as he slips back under the threshold, and he is shocked to find that his momentary *vis-à-vis* has no respect for the decencies of style. But he does not remember the facts. By the arbitrary caprice of dreams Number Two had to explain that he did not understand machinery, and that he could not help, in a sentence which contained only one verb. The literary faculty, the sense of style, were dormant; but the constructive faculty, within set limitations, was tolerably wide awake. Number Two knew that only one-clause sentences were 'up' as they say in the newspaper offices, and he did not do badly with his material.

In other ways Number Two gains by this dissociation. Like the earlier poets of a language—he has an ampler field. Words come to him fresh from their sources; they are not vulgarised by conventional uses or sordid connections. He saw nothing incongruous in his ode beginning 'Oh! Time has long ears,' or in the title of the new novel 'Old and Tight,' which was discussed at a subliminal dinner party. There must have been some supraliminal oaf in the room, for it was suggested that if it had been 'Young and Tight' it would not have mattered so much. How unspeakable to Number Two is the ingrained vulgarity of the life above the threshold.

Number Two keeps better company. There is a delightful subliminal lady he meets sometimes, who reads the hearts of wild creatures. She is always gathering flowers and holding out a hand to caress the long cold nose of some browsing beastie. Sometimes a little girl trips by her side picking up her lore.

'Do you know why horses don't quite understand?'

'No? Why, please?'

'Because of the fur in their ears.'

The little girl was found in the manger of her black Shetland 'Fanny.' The pony edged away suspiciously from the scissors in her hand, and she was sad-eyed because she could not reach the long hairs which made it impossible for 'Fanny' to 'quite understand.'

I heard the subliminal lady trying to explain to her black Aberdeen that darkness and night were objective phenomena, and not a change, as that good creature believed, which came over his own eyes about dinner time, a kind of film or inability to see associated, in the natural order of things, with the hours of digestion.

She often uses words which Number Two has not heard, but he always understands them. She was changing a bowl of primroses one day, when she said to the little girl by her side: 'I think the beenies look so sweet,' and Number Two knew she meant the drooping ones, the primroses that had been, which she dropped with tender hesitation into the basket for the dead and faded.

Thoughts gather their symbols very easily in sleep. New words are accepted without surprise. Passing a workmanlike group of Tommies, Number Two heard his friend say: 'There's a good bit of "neither" in that lot,' and he knew that 'neither' meant a mixture of self-assertiveness, obstinacy, conviction, grit, and that the word was derived from the emphatic double negative of the British soldier, which comes in so patly at the end of the sentence to clinch what has gone before. Number One had been reading Kipling and had been struck by Ortheris' phrase:

'I've fell out and been sick on the Tangi twice and wot turns my innards ain't no bloomin' vilets neither.'

A traveller who had just come back from a trip in East Africa, showed Number Two a map of the Ruwenzori Range, which he had made himself. When Two asked him how he had done it, he said: 'By pavlation.' Two had not heard the word before, but he recognised in 'pav' the root of 'pavement' and knew that

his friend must have pieced his map together in a kind of mosaic by small bits at a time, as the triangulation system had been impossible on account of the perpetual clouds round the summit.

Number One is unhappy when he wakes before the sun, and his very unhappiness in these grey hours is a subconscious testimony to the comforting presence of Number Two. One is never so much alone as in those few seconds before one has obtained a grip of life, when one is full of vague apprehensions, and the eternal Moira looms indefinite, weighing down the spirit with no cause except that one cannot explain what one is doing in this whirl of unsympathetic matter, and the spirit is afraid and ill at ease in its shell, and even more afraid at the notion of being rid of it. The subliminal self may have wandered through these shadows all night unafraid, but the supraliminal ego is distressed when he crosses his partner to take over charge, and sees him slipping back into shadowland. Soon the supraliminal lantern will be throwing its coloured pictures on the wall—fainter than in sleep—to cheat him till he dreams again, but he is chilled in the grey interval when Number Two is passing, before he has his foothold, while he is looking into the abyss.

'We are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps,' old Sir Thomas Browne mused. 'Were my memory as faithful as my reason is, then fruitful, I would never study, but in my dreams. . . . I am no way facetious, nor disposed to the mirth and galliardise of company; yet in one dream I can compose a whole comedy, behold the actors, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the deceits thereof.'

Truly Number Two is a winged visionary. Number One might have known it, yet the hulking Philistine and clown, who goes about calling himself Jones or Smith, must needs parade this little genius in motley, styling him a bizarre, irresponsible being, a disreputable understudy, an oaf, with whom he would not be mixed up publicly.

Which of us does not owe his apologia to Number Two, the little lantern-man, dramatist, artist, player, to whom we are beholden for a thousand and one nights of entertainment—to the little coy genius we all house within us if only we could conjure him out, who sits by the threshold weaving the coloured threads which our clumsy waking self has tossed him during the day?

EDMUND CANDLER.

MADAME GILBERT'S CANNIBAL.

BY BENNET COPPLESTONE.

I. His Lordship.

It was at La Grande Pâtisserie Belge that Madame stumbled across the lawyer who was fated to introduce her to the Cannibal of whom she told me later in Whitehall. I had trouble enough to get it all out of Madame, who, after she became my assistant private secretary (unpaid) in the autumn of last year, played the part so very thoroughly that her whole day became absorbed in official duties. Permanent Heads of Departments, inhumanly blind to her face and figure—which even a coat frock could not make dowdy—yet enraptured by her alert competence, contended for the privilege of a transfer to themselves. She remained loyal to me—I will concede her that, in justice—but she was so intent upon working herself, and compelling me to work, that she would permit of scant time for gossip. I would bargain half an hour of honest labour against ten minutes of her adventures, and in this toilsome fashion earned the story that I write.

It was a melancholy afternoon in January, 1919. Peace had not brought plenty—especially of coal—and Madame was fortifying herself against the damp chills of London by long draughts of the hottest coffee, and the sweetest and stickiest confectionery which even she could relish. About six feet distant, on what one may describe as her 'port quarter,' sat a middle-aged Englishman, whose bagging clothes proclaimed that war rations had dealt sorely with his once ample person. Madame (who, without turning her head, examined him in critical detail) judged that his loss in weight was three stone. He had the clean-shaven face, and alert aspect, of a lawyer or doctor. In fancied security, a little to the left and rear of Madame Gilbert, the stranger stared openly at her cheek and ear, and the coils of bright copper hair. Madame knew that he was watching her, and rather liked the scrutiny. She had recognised him at once, and would have been slightly humiliated if he had failed to be interested in her. It is true that she had met him but once before in her life, and that some four years since, but as Madame had condescended to recollect him—her memory for faces was royal—a failure on his part to remember her would have been an offence unpardonable.

Madame continued to munch sweetstuff, and the man, his tea completed, rose, paid his bill, and then passed slowly in front of her. He needed encouragement before he would speak. So Madame gave it, a quick look and a smile of invitation. He bowed. 'Have I not the honour to meet again the Signora Guilberti?' said he.

'The Signora Guilberti,' assented Madame, 'or Madame Guilbert, or Madame Gilbert, as rendered by the rough English tongue. I have stooped to Anglicise my name,' she went on, 'though I hate the clipped English version.' She indicated a chair and the lawyer—he was a lawyer—sat down.

'Is it possible that Madame honours me with remembrance?'

'Let me place you,' said she, happy in the display of her accomplishments, 'and don't seek to guide my memory. It was in the spring of 1915, at a reception in the garden of Devonshire House. You were in attendance upon Her Majesty the Queen-Mother of Portugal. There were present representatives of the Italian Red Cross; for Italy, the land of my late husband, had ranged herself with the Allies. You are a lawyer of the *haute noblesse*. Your clients are peers and princes, of old princes in exile and of new peers in possession. I recall you most distinctly, though at that time, my poor friend, you were not a little portly, and now you are a man shrunken.'

'And my name?' he asked, flattered that a beautiful woman should recall him so distinctly.

'It is a strange name—Gatepath. An old English name, redolent of the soil. Roger Gatepath. Your firm bears no prefix of initials, and no suffix of "Company." You call yourselves Gatepaths. Just "Gatepaths," as though your status were territorial!'

He crowed with pleasure. By an exercise in memory, Madame Gilbert had tied him to her chariot wheels.

'Right,' cried he, 'right in every particular! You are the most wonderful of women. For two minutes I spoke with you, and that was nearly four years ago. I was one of a large party, an insignificant lawyer, lost in dazzling company of titles. Yet you have remembered!'

Madame left the sense of flattery to soak in. She did not spoil the impression that she had made, by explaining that she would have remembered a lackey with just the same accuracy.

'And you, Madame?' he asked, 'Have you been all these

years doing war work with the Italian Red Cross? The years have passed, and left no mark upon your face and figure. I, who comfortably filled out my clothes, am shrunken, yet time and sorrow have spared you.'

'Nevertheless, I have been pretty hard at work,' said Madame briskly. 'I was present, at that party, ostensibly as an official of the Italian Red Cross. In fact I was there to see that no harm befell the Royal personages who were in my charge. While we moved about those pleasant grounds, chatting and sipping tea, I was watching, watching. And my hand was never far from the butt of the Webley automatic which was slung from my waist, hidden in a bag of silk.'

'Heavens!' he cried out, 'You are——'

'Hush!' interposed Madame. 'A lawyer and a Gatepath should be more discreet. The War is over, and I can tell you now that I fought every minute of it in the Secret Service—the Civil Branch. I was the Head Woman, the bright particular star, in Dawson's Secret Corps.'

'Is it discreet to tell me this?' he asked, countering her reproof of a moment earlier.

She smiled rather wickedly. 'Are you not a lawyer and a Gatepath? And can one not tell anything to a lawyer and a Gatepath? Besides, I have sent in my resignation and am now a free woman. It has been a good time, a very good time. I have fought devils, and mastered devils, in England and France and Italy for four long years, and now I would rest. You say that time and sorrow have spared me. Yet I have known both time and sorrow. Have I not lost——'

He broke into a babble of apologies. 'I did not know—I did not realise——'

She waved a hand, and he fell silent. 'I do not wear the trappings of woe; for though I am eternally widowed, I glory in my loss. It was in the rearguard at Caporetto, when all less gallant souls had fled, that my Guilberti fell.'

Of course, from that moment, Gatepath was her slave. She had flattered him and humbugged him, as she flattered and humbugged all of us. With Captain Rust (of 'The Lost Naval Papers'), it was her yarn of the Colonel of French Territorials, blown into unburiable fragments at Le Grand Couronné, that laid him out. With Roger Gatepath, it was Guilberti in the rearguard at Caporetto. It is always with some husband, real or invented, that she plays—the

one best adapted to her horrid purpose of the moment. Madame had no designs against Gatepath, yet she could not forbear to triumph over him. 'One never knows,' she says, 'when one may need a devoted friend, and need him badly. I always look forward.'

Two or three weeks later, Madame found a letter at her club signed 'Gatepaths.' It was the club in Dover Street with those steep steps, down which the members tumble helplessly in frosty weather. Madame calls it 'The Club of Falling Women.'

It appears that Gatepath, hunting for an adviser of ripe wisdom, had sought out the Chief of Dawson, and lately of Madame, and laid bare his pressing troubles. The Chief is one of those rare men to whom all his friends—and they are as the stars in number—go seeking counsel in their crimes and follies. Nothing shocks him, nothing surprises him. And from the depths of his wise, humorous, sympathetic mind, he will almost always draw waters of comfort. Suppose, for example, one had slain a man, and urgently sought to dispose of the corpse—a not uncommon problem in crowded cities—to whom could one more profitably turn than to the Chief of His Majesty's Detective Service? Or if, in a passing fit of absence of mind, one had wedded three wives, and the junior in rank began to suspect the existence of one or more seniors—do we not all suffer from lapse of memory? One does not put these problems before the Chief as one's own—there is a decent convention in these matters—but, of course, he knows. To know all is to pardon all, and there is very little that the Chief does not know about you—or me.

The family solicitor of peers and princes poured into the Chief's ear the fantastic cause of his present distresses. He delivered himself of the story in all seriousness, for it was dreadfully serious to him. Never, in all his experience, and in that of his century-old firm, had anything so dreadfully serious occurred. The Chief controlled himself until the end was reached, and then exploded in a yell of laughter.

'It is nothing to laugh at,' grumbled Gatepath.

'Not for you, perhaps. But, to my mind, the situation is gorgeous. Has this man the legal right of succession?'

'Beyond a doubt,' groaned Gatepath. 'His father saw to that.'

'Then why not leave matters to take their legal course?' asked the Chief, still laughing. 'The House of Lords will be the

better for shock. They are a dull lot. And your lively friend will administer the shock all right.'

Roger Gatepath spread out his hands in agony. 'But it is one of the oldest peerages in the country, as old, almost, as the Barony of Arundel. Can't you see how frightful it will be for the family if this—this person—is allowed to succeed?'

'There is no question of allowing him. If he is the legal heir, he must succeed. The family must just put him in their pipe and smoke him. What else can they do?'

'I thought that you, with all your experience of the South, might suggest something. Would it not be possible to buy the man off?—or might he not——'

'How can you buy him off when he is the heir? You people are nothing but trustees, who must account to him for every penny. If he claims the peerage and estates, you must accept him. You admit that legally he is the heir. I can see what is in your mind, but it won't do, Gatepath, it won't do. If you try any hanky-panky, that pretty neck of yours will find itself in a hempen collar. Now, if it was only a case for judicious kidnapping——'

Gatepath looked round anxiously. The men were alone in a recess of the club smoking-room. 'Yes,' he whispered eagerly, 'Yes! Go on.'

'I shall not do anything of the sort. You are a nice sort of family solicitor, Gatepath. Apart from the personal danger of playing tricks, can't you see that your interest lies with the bouncing heir, not with the snuffy old family? Don't be an ass. Bring him home, give the House of Lords the sensation of their placid lives, and let the good old British Public enjoy a week of laughter. How they will bellow with joy! And the newspapers! I can see, Gatepath, that your agreeable young heir is going to be the success of the season.'

'You are not very helpful,' groaned Gatepath. 'There must be a solution; there must be some way of shielding the family from this frightful humiliation.'

The interview with the Chief was a complete failure, and Gatepath parted from his old friend both hurt and angry. He had not expected ribald laughter in so grave a social crisis. The Chief must be a Radical, a Socialist, even a Bolshevik—one empty of all decent political principles.

It was on his way home that Gatepath bethought him of Madame Gilbert. She—that beautiful, loyal-hearted woman—would not

laugh. He remembered the glitter of unshed tears in the violet eyes, when she had bid him farewell. It was his tactless hand upon the open wound of Caporetto which had aroused those tears. He remembered also that Madame was free, and that she had been trained to do the ruthless, unscrupulous, work of the Secret Service. She did not look either ruthless or unscrupulous, and it was in a strictly professional sense that Gatepath connected her with these unfeminine attributes. In his troubles, Gatepath needed advice and sympathy, and Madame Gilbert, to his mind, filled the double bill. At any rate he did not know, now that the Chief had failed him, any man or any woman who was more likely than Madame to be sweetly helpful.

When Madame read the formal typewritten communication, signed 'Gatepaths,' she grinned. It did not surprise her that a recent victim should seek the excuse of urgent business to gain access to her presence. The letter asked for an appointment at a time and place agreeable to her convenience. It jumped with her bizarre humour to suggest Charing Cross Station at two o'clock in the morning, but ultimately she rang up Roger on the telephone, and fixed an hour in the forenoon at his own office in Lincoln's Inn Fields. To Charing Cross Station at two o'clock in the morning, she would have gleefully gone in the long black cloak and velvet mask of a conspirator; but for the interview in Lincoln's Inn Fields she was pleased to cast herself in the part of a woman of business —severe, solemn, business. Gatepath's welcome was nervous; he scarcely recognised, in the solemnly severe woman of business, the bereaved widow of La Grande Pâtisserie Belge. Madame seated herself, spread out her wide sombre skirts, and prepared to listen to the urgencies which had impelled the adviser of peers and princes to seek her co-operation.

Gatepath got to work at once. He saw that Madame expected value for her complaisance, and he gave it in full measure.

'You will have heard, Madame, of the family of Toppys, pronounced "Tops." Like other famous families of Devon, when the Conqueror came, they were at home. In the twelfth century they were the recognised holders of the Barony of Topsham, a village and manor on the river Exe. Topsham means the home of the Toppys, pronounced "Tops." The title fell into abeyance for a couple of centuries, and the manor of Topsham has long since passed to the Courtenays. But Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth revived the ancient barony. Ever since then, for three hundred

and fifty years, the head of the family of Toppys has been the Baron of Topsham. We—' Gatepath, in his excited interest identified himself with the famous family of Toppys, pronounced 'Tops'—' we are allowed to date the peerage from the original writ of summons, and the Lord Topsham, whose lamented death occurred last year, was the twenty-seventh baron. I wish you to appreciate the almost unapproachable lineage of the family upon whom has fallen a disaster without parallel in history. The twenty-seventh baron is dead ; his successor will be the twenty-eighth. Have you got that ? '

' I have,' said Madame sweetly. She longed to add, ' Audited and found correct ! ' It would sound splendidly business-like, but might give offence as frivolous.

' Some twenty years ago, one of the brothers of the late Lord Topsham left this country, and settled on an island in the Torres Straits. It was an extraordinary thing to do, for one who was neither a wastrel nor a criminal. The Hon. William Toppys was neither. My father, who knew him well, has told me that he was only mad. To be mad is a misadventure which may overtake the most cautious of us—ancient houses are prone to develop a reputable and characteristic species of insanity—but to indulge an individual madness to the disgrace of one's family is a crime. In the legal and conventional sense, the Hon. William Toppys was not a criminal, yet he committed the worst of crimes against his ancient and glorious lineage.' The body of Roger Gatepath swelled with wrath, until it almost filled his pre-war clothes.

Madame longed to say, ' Good old Bill ! ' but again refrained. The story was beginning to amuse her.

' The Hon. William Toppys settled on an island in the Torres Straits, and became what is called locally a beach-comber. This degradation was not forced upon him by poverty. He was not wealthy, but from his late mother he derived a competence—some few hundreds of pounds a year. We acted for his trustees, and regularly remitted his dividends to a bank in Thursday Island. Perhaps, Madame, it will assist you if I ring for an atlas ? '

' Do not trouble,' said Madame sweetly, ' I have a rough working acquaintance with geography. Thursday Island is a little to the north of Queensland. It is a centre for pearl fishing. That is why I remember the place.'

' The Hon. William Toppys built himself a hut on a small islet in the Straits, and married a native woman—a Melanesian woman.'

'Married?' enquired Madame. 'How? Native fashion, *sans cérémonie*?'

'Unhappily, no. His marriage was celebrated and registered at the Melanesian Mission's station on Thursday Island. It was, I repeat, unhappily as legal a contract as your own marriage.'

'You shock me,' said Madame primly, though she struggled against laughter. 'Would you have had the Hon. William Toppys live—in sin—with a native woman?'

'I would,' shouted Gatepath.

Madame covered her face with her hands, and her silks—her business-like silks—rustled with emotion.

'It pains me to express sentiments which you must regard as immoral'—the silks went on rustling—'but I must look at that fatal marriage from the point of view, the just point of view, of the ancient family of Toppys.'

'Pronounced "Tops,"' whispered Madame, as she came up to breathe.

'The Hon. William Toppys sent us word of his marriage. That was nearly twenty years ago. He also, with unparalleled effrontery, communicated to his brother, the late Lord Topsham, the dates of the births of his son and his two daughters. Those births were all registered in due form at Thursday Island. If the Hon. William Toppys had designed to humiliate, to outrage, the most ancient and honourable family in Devon—save only that of the Courtenays—he could not have gone about the business more thoroughly or systematically. He is dead. He died in 1912. But I cannot speak good of the dead. He committed a crime, a series of crimes. He lawfully married a Melanesian woman, and he lawfully begat a son and heir.'

'What about the two daughters?' whispered Madame in throes of suffocation.

'The daughters don't matter,' said Gatepath. 'He could have had a dozen if he pleased. The Barony of Topsham descends to heirs male, not to heirs general.'

At this point Madame fell from grace. It had become obvious, to one less alert than she, that the lawfully begotten son of the Hon. William Toppys (pronounced 'Tops') and the Melanesian wife, was the half-caste twenty-eighth Baron of Topsham, and that the ancient family of Toppys was wild about it. So was Gatepath—wild, furious. He gesticulated, his cheeks puffed out. In him was embodied, for Madame to see and laugh over, all the fury of all the

Toppyses, male and female. She could not help but laugh—in peals—till the tears came.

Roger Gatepath groaned. 'I did think that you, Madame, would refrain from ribaldry. Consider the position of my clients. This horror that is come upon them is not an occasion for laughter.'

'I am really awfully sorry,' gasped Madame, wiping her eyes. 'It must be dreadful for you all. But, to a stranger like me, it is frightfully funny.'

'You won't think it funny when you hear the rest of my story,' growled Gatepath. 'But perhaps I had better stop.'

'Oh, please, don't! I am immensely interested and thrilled. I want to hear every word. You tell the story so splendidly, Mr Gatepath, that I should be wild if you stopped now.'

Gatepath continued. The sacred fire of vicarious family indignation had been somewhat abated by Madame's laughter, but he warmed up as he proceeded. He was convinced that the gracious Madame Gilbert would share his horror when the tale reached its tragic close.

'You may ask how, after 350 years of direct succession, the ancient and honourable family of Toppys should have failed of heirs—except this half-caste spawn of a Melanesian savage. It is the War that has brought this disaster upon us. The only son of the late Lord Topsham was killed at Ypres early in the War. The two sons of the second brother were in the Flying Corps, and fell, with so many other honourable gentlemen, in the spring of 1918. Both were killed within a week. Their death was a blow from which Lord Topsham never recovered. His own brothers had both gone before, and the casualties of war had transferred the succession to that coffee-coloured monster in the Torres Straits. Lord Topsham just withered away. I ventured to urge a second marriage, but his lordship had no heart to struggle. Rather than give heirship to the beach-comber's brat I would have married a housemaid by special licence, and begotten a son, if I had never lived to see him born.'

'It might have been a useless daughter,' murmured Madame unkindly.

Gatepath growled.

Madame Gilbert now pulled herself together. Her ribald laughter had sorely weakened her influence over the solicitor of peers and princes, and she felt impelled to regain it. It was now her rôle to become sympathetically helpful.

'Are you sure, Mr. Gatepath, that you do not make this grievous affair worse by exaggerating it? The Hon. William Toppys was an English gentleman. He went in for the simple life, as a beach-comber with a Melanesian wife, but he must have remained a gentleman by instinct. His son may not be so very brown—some half-castes are almost white—and has probably, almost surely, been brought up as a gentleman. Why not make the best of the situation, bring him home, and let me take the boy in hand? I will make of him a cavalier almost worthy to belong to the ancient House of Toppys.'

'It is impossible,' said Gatepath, and his air was that of Sir Henry Irving in 'Macbeth.' 'I have seen the twenty-eighth Baron of Topsham with my own eyes.'

'That was very sporting of you,' cried Madame in admiration. 'Did you go out all alone to the Torres Straits, and beard the man-eater in his den?'

'I went, and I went alone. It was a fearful journey. The War was still raging, and it strained all the influence of Gatepaths to secure me a passage to America in a returning troopship. Thence I travelled to San Francisco, got a Japanese steamer to Yokohama, another Japanese steamer to Singapore, and yet another—a small one, which rolled abominably—to Thursday Island. I cannot tell you, without reference to my diary, how many weeks and months I was tossed about the loathsome deep. The schooner from Thursday Island to the haunt of the late Hon. William Toppys was the worst of my tortures. It was crammed with unclothed men and women of all colours, from pale olive to dark walnut, and it smelt like a hogshead of rancid fat. The South Sea Islands are a romantic fraud, Madame. They reek to Heaven, and brew so many different brands of stinks, that one can never get acclimatised. Can you wonder that I, who once was well-favoured in person, am now an old man, shrunken, wizened into premature senility before my time? I arrived at my journey's end, and there, Madame, I saw the young man, whom you so very kindly propose to take in hand and make a cavalier almost worthy of the House of Toppys. I saw his Lordship with my own eyes.'

'And was he so very impossible?' asked Madame; for the solicitor of the Toppyses had stopped, struck dumb by his emotion.

'Impossible!' he shrieked. 'His Lordship, the twenty-eighth Baron of Topsham, is a naked Cannibal, running about the beach with a spear.'

. . . . . .

It is fortunate that Madame Gilbert had already indulged her unseemly sense of humour. Had she exploded at this tragic moment, I should have been robbed of my story. I am sure, from what I know of Roger Gatepath that he would have thrust her shrieking from his room, and written her off for ever, as unworthy to be associated with the ancient and still exalted House of Toppys. She shook, gurgled desperately for an instant, and then composed her features to a becoming gravity. If was a masterly effort, for one with her vivid imagination. She has told me that before her, plain to see, she visualised the heir of the Barony of Topsham, a broad, grinning, coffee-coloured face, rising above the crimson and ermine robes of a peer of England. In one hand he held the patent of his barony, in the other a stabbing spear. It was a vision gorgeous! Yet, with this figure of fun before her inward eyes, she choked down her laughter. It was a heroic effort.

Roger Gatepath lay back in his chair, rent and exhausted by professional suffering. Madame whipped out her case, and offered one of those favourite Russian cigarettes of which even the Bolshevists could not bereave her. Gatepath grabbed and smoked. He would have grabbed and smoked opium, hashish, anything which could for an instant unravel the tangled skein of care.

'You are a great woman, Madame,' he murmured. 'Not even your cigarettes are in the least like anyone else's. Please give me another.'

'Now,' said Madame briskly, when the calm of deep narcotic satisfaction had smoothed out the lawyer's face. 'I want to hear lots more. I am intrigued, and your story has got no farther than a thunderous beginning.'

'It has gone no farther, as yet,' said he, 'and can go no farther until the half-caste savage of the Torres Straits learns of his monstrous heirship.'

'So you travelled fifteen thousand miles, in the crisis of war, when all men and women within reach of a newspaper thrilled alternate hope and fear, just to look once at the twenty-eighth Baron of Topsham, and then to return? Months of hardship going out, and months more of hardship coming back. Just to look once, without speaking! You are a remarkable man, Mr. Gatepath. I should, at least, have made his intimate acquaintance. He may be less of a savage Cannibal than he looks.'

'I went to the hut of the Hon. Mrs. William Toppys,' explained the lawyer. 'It is, I am informed, a high-class hut, thatched on

walls and roofs with leaves of sago palm. No aristocrat of the South Seas had ever a finer or more luxurious residence. Yet it is a hut of one room in which the Hon. Mrs. William Toppys, her two daughters, and her son—known to the world of this little island as "Willatopy"—live, eat, and sleep, the four of them, indifferent to the most primitive dictates of decency. At the back is constructed a cook-house. Neither edifice boasts a chimney. The family reside, have resided for years, in this loathsome hovel, unattended by the humblest menial. The Right Honourable Lord Topsham'—driven by his legal conscience, Gatepath never withheld from the heir his lawful title—'The Right Honourable Lord Topsham has not even a black footboy.'

Madame gurgled. 'He has small occasion for a valet, I expect?'

Gatepath groaned. 'A boot-lace about his middle, and a few feathers stuck in his frizzy hair, seemed to constitute his entire toilet.'

'It is evident,' observed Madame, 'that the late beach-comber, the Hon. William Toppys, was a very thorough artist. Having determined upon the simple life, he never looked back. His wife remained a native, his sons and daughters were brought up in exact accordance with the native model. We can dismiss the one living and sleeping room, and the absence of menials, as in no sense derogatory to the dignity of Toppys. Have you no worse to tell me of the family than that?'

Gatepath wriggled uneasily. 'His Lordship,' muttered he, after a blushing pause—Madame was privileged to see a lawyer blush—'did me the honour to prod me with his spear, in the middle of my back.'

'Wherefore this outrage?'

'I ventured to inform his honourable mother, who stood outside the hut, that the day was fine.'

'And he misunderstood your intentions?' Madame let herself go for a moment and laughed—that rippling laugh which plays on the hearts of her victims like a flame on wax. 'A widow, I have heard, is in little respect in the South Seas, and the heir of the Toppyses drew cold iron in defence of his so scandalously accosted mother. Come, come, Mr. Gatepath, this incident suggests no savagery. It may indicate that the heart of the boy is white after all!'

'He prodded me in the back, he pursued me to my boat, and

would doubtless have killed and eaten my body, had I not fled with incredible speed. I have never run so fast since I won the hundred for Cambridge at the Queen's Club.'

'You and the Hon. Mrs. William Toppys must have been deeply absorbed in the beauties of the weather when the Cannibal, with his spear, broke in upon the conversation?'

'On my honour, I did but speak with her for a minute. She is light of colour, and of a countenance not disagreeable. Her English is not fluent, yet she speaks it with intelligence and has the language of social courtesy. Her accent, too, is not unpleasant, she softens the harsh English consonants, and gives full tone value to the rich English vowels.'

'It seems to have been a very fine day, and taken a lot of talking about,' said Madame drily.

'I wanted to discover why the Hon. William Toppys had married the woman, and why he made so certain of the proofs of his marriage.'

'Quite so. And while engaged upon your researches discovered that the Hon. William Toppys was not so very mad after all?'

'No,' declared the lawyer stoutly, 'he was a mad and wicked criminal to marry her. But I could realise that some twenty years earlier, in the first bloom of her pale brown beauty, the Hon. Mrs. William Toppys was worth the sacrifice of any man's moral scruples. I could, as a youngster, have loved her myself. But then I should never have made the hideous, the ghastly, blunder of marrying her, except in native fashion.'

'We progress,' said Madame, laughing again. 'The mother of the Cannibal has found favour in your sight, and the Cannibal ran you down to the boat lest you should find favour in hers. And how long, pray, was this island idyll in the playing?'

'I was less than half an hour on the island.'

'So you came, saw, and conquered, all within half an hour. And then there broke in the heir of Toppys with his most intrusive spear. It was exceedingly tactless of him. A widow, especially a South Sea widow, would not have tarried long in the wooing. I can understand now that your feeling towards the heir must be tempestuous. A journey of fifteen thousand miles, a talk for less than half an hour with a pale-brown widow of fascinating accent and aspect. Then the crushing arrival of the too jealous son, the rending asunder of scarce-joined hearts, the flight to the boat without a moment of farewell, and—fifteen thousand weary

miles of return! In your place, Mr. Gatepath, I should wholeheartedly loathe that doubly inconvenient son.'

'You are pleased to be witty at my expense, Madame Gilbert,' grumbled Gatepath, 'and we wander sadly from the purpose of the interview with which you have honoured me this morning. That was to talk about the Cannibal, and not about the Cannibal's mother.'

'Proceed!' said Madame, lying back in her chair, and lighting yet another cigarette. 'I'm dying to make his further acquaintance.'

'You are an astute woman, Madame Gilbert, and will already have grasped that the trustees of the settled estates of the Barony of Topsham—of whom I am the legal adviser—are in a position profoundly embarrassing. They don't know what the devil to do, and I don't know what the devil of advice to give! Our strictly legal duty is beyond doubt. We should notify the heir of his succession, and take the necessary steps to have him seized of his ancestral lands and revenues. They are not great, although they represent a fair competence, even in these days of exorbitant estate duties. There are wealthy members of the family of Toppys engaged in business pursuits, but they, though deeply interested, are not at present in the direct line of succession. Some eight months have passed since Lord Topsham died, and no steps have been taken to acquaint the twenty-eighth baron of his—of his damnable ill-fortune. We ought to have moved long since, we must move soon, yet how and in what direction can we move? I went to the Torres Straits to spy out the land, and to consider a course of action. I have returned baffled. The trustees are baffled. The family of Toppys is baffled.

'We cannot delay much longer. The family of Toppys is of the greatest distinction, the Barony of Topsham is a part of the national history. A failure on the part of the trustees to produce an heir cannot pass unnoticed. There are in my profession many unscrupulous practitioners, hedge lawyers, who would greedily rush at the chance of hunting up an heir, and securing his interest and business for themselves. The trustees cannot permit this; Gatepaths cannot permit this. It were better that my firm should act for a Cannibal Lordship, than that he should be the helpless prey of a legal pirate. And yet, if Gatepaths did what is their undoubted duty, namely notified the heir and represented him, they would infallibly lose the valuable, the very valuable, connections of all the other members of the family. We are in a

horrid quandary. We cannot let slip from among our clients the Baron of Topsham, and we cannot let slip the other members, some of them very wealthy, of the House of Toppys. But how to keep both passes understanding. I have mentioned the risk, and it is no small risk, lest some hedge lawyer should get his nose upon the trail of His Cannibal Lordship of the Torres Straits. There is another risk which will become more insistent with every month of delay. The twenty-eighth baron is nineteen years old, an age of full virile maturity in the South Seas. He may marry any day some native woman, and raise, with the utmost celerity, a crop of savage heirs to his body. If, at the instigation of his mother, he follows the detestable practice of his late father, the marriage will be legal by our law, and the spawn of it legitimate. Should this further disaster have time to mature—and nothing is more certain of consummation in a minimum of time—the coffee-coloured cannibal line of Toppys will be impregnably entrenched. Nothing but a special Act of Parliament could bomb it out, and in these days of Revolutionary Socialism the House of Commons would never pass a Disabling Act. The ribald cynicism of many members would lead them to enjoy the gross humiliation of the Upper Chamber. We can look for no help from Parliament; we must look to our own brains and hands. I have gone to the Torres Straits and failed. It does not follow that Madame Gilbert would also fail.'

'Wait a bit,' quoth Madame. 'I must know a lot more, and see a lot more, before I take any hand in this business. I confess frankly that my sympathies lean towards the Cannibal. He, the undoubted heir of an ancient family, is without friends in a far island. He is the son of his father, and, despite his skin, must be half white in blood. He may be more than half white in heart and brain. What have you against him except the rich Melanesian infusion in his veins? Nothing except the exquisite simplicity of his dress—you said, I recall, that he wore a boot-lace about his middle, and adorned his frizzy hair with feathers. Your visit was on the edge of the Southern summer, at a season when even you or I would gladly travel light in clothing. I feel that a feather head-dress, and a petticoat of stripped banana leaves, would become me mightily. If the twenty-eighth Baron Topsham were really a savage cannibal, in fact as well as by birth, I might perhaps share your wrath and agitation. But at present I am frankly on his side. His appearance in the House of Lords would be startling,

but the old dears would be the better for a shock. So would London society. I confess that I look forward to his succession with intense amusement. It would be perfectly lovely, *une bizarrerie superbe.*'

'You will excuse my inability to appreciate your levity,' growled Gatepath.

'That is why you are baffled by this little domestic problem,' said Madame. 'If you and the portentous Family of Toppys had enough of humour to take yourselves less seriously, you would perceive that all the world will laugh when the disclosure comes. It is more agreeable to laugh with the world, than to be laughed at by it. You think that your retainers, male and female, discreetly solemn in your presence, are desolated by the misfortunes of the family. Believe me when I tell you that they are howling with derision. Your men-servants and your maid-servants within your gates are roaring together over the family humiliation. Your ox and your ass, and your old family coach-horse are gaping at you. Your chauffeur, educated, maybe, in a Modern Radical school of motoring, is inclined by your misfortunes towards a belief in Providence. Even your Rolls Royce forgets its aristocratic ghostly calm, and gurgles. Make up your ancient Toppys minds, Mr. Gatepath, that no man or woman in this modern world cares a depreciated tuppence for the woes of an historic peerage. You, and your Family of Toppys, suffer from distorted vision. Laugh, man, laugh, and recover some sense of perspective! Put yourself outside this museum of mouldy antiquities, of which you are the hereditary legal adviser, and regard them for a moment from a point of detachment. Have you got that? Now laugh!'

But the gloom upon the countenance of Gatepath remained unbroken. It was less the embarrassments of Toppys that obsessed him, than the predicament into which his firm had drifted. If he stood by the heir, he lost the business of Toppys; if he stood by the family, he resigned the heir to some intrusive perspicuous supplanter. The firm would 'get left' either way. It is not surprising that Roger Gatepath and humour had become strangers.

The conspirators sat speechless for the space of two minutes, which is a long time of silence between Western people.

It was Madame, of course, who broke the pause of contemplation.

'Who will benefit?' asked she suddenly.

'I don't understand,' muttered Gatepath.

'I am not good to play with,' said Madame, rather sternly. 'Not even Dawson, not even his great Chief, may play tricks with Madame Gilbert. And they know it. Come, Mr. Gatepath. You did not summon me here to tell a pleasing story of the embarrassments of the Toppys family. At the back of your mind, you had a plan. You proposed to ask me to pull chestnuts out of a fire which is too hot for the fingers of someone who conceals himself. Who is it? Who will become the heir of Topsham, should Madame Gilbert be persuaded to kidnap or assassinate the inconvenient twenty-eighth baron? Who proposes to make himself twenty-ninth in succession to that noble line?'

Gatepath shuddered at her plain speaking. But he had the sense to see that, with Madame, all cards must be placed upon the table. Already she knew enough to be dangerous. If she went forth in anger, then there might be, there certainly would be, the very devil to pay.

'The next heir,' said he shortly, 'is Sir John Toppys, Baronet, of Wigan.'

'And who is Sir John Toppys, who has chosen so very unattractive a spot as the seat of his baronetcy?'

'He is the first cousin of the late lord. Their common grandfather was the twenty-fifth baron. Sir John will infallibly succeed, if the senior line fails. I agree that Wigan is as lacking in residential amenities as Dundee or Motherwell, but it has been a very mine of golden wealth to the junior branch of Toppys. Coal and iron, Madame, are more productive than diamonds. Sir John Toppys was rich before the War; now he has advanced to wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. His great services to the State have been plenteously rewarded, in spite of the exactions of the disgraceful Excess Profits duty. At his works, guns have been made in thousands, and shells in millions. He, and those like him, have as surely won the War as have our heroic soldiers and sailors—who, it must be confessed, have received less adequate rewards. The wealth and position of Sir John Toppys are such that he could command a peerage from any British Government. But to him, a true Toppys of the ancient line—though of a junior branch—a newly-gilt title would have no value. Is he not, at this moment, heir presumptive of the twenty-eighth baron—the Cannibal of the Torres Straits—and can one feel surprise that he resents and detests the shameful marriage of the Hon. William Toppys, by means of which his branch of the family has been supplanted?

I am legal adviser to Sir John Toppys, Baronet, of Wigan, and between these close walls, Madame, I may say that he would stick at nothing to secure—the removal—of the—obstruction.'

'You and Sir John Toppys are a pretty pair!' quoth Madame. 'For sheer lawlessness, even in time of war, I have come upon nothing which can compare with you. You deliberately conspire to compass the—the removal—of the Heir of Topsham, and you do not apparently give heed to the risks which both of you are running. You think, in your foolishness, that if I were bribed by the gold of Wigan to carry through the enterprise, the pretty neck of Madame would be alone imperilled. Permit me to scatter your illusions. Should Madame Gilbert hang for her mercenary zeal in the interests of a white succession, Sir John Toppys and Roger Gatepath would stand beside her upon the drop. We should be an engaging party,' murmured Madame, contemplating the vision with enjoyment, 'Madame Gilbert in the centre, by honour of her sex and her superior infamy; Roger to her left; John on her right. At the word "Go!"—or whatever is tastefully appropriate to the ceremony—the hangman would pull the lever, and the three culprits would disappear into what is termed prophetically "The Pit." At the inquest—I always think that an inquest after a legal hanging is a superb touch of British humour—evidence would be given to prove that the triple execution had been well and truly carried out. We should all three be buried in quicklime, within the precincts of the jail.' Madame smacked her lips. 'No, Mr. Gatepath; not even for this gratifying conclusion to our joint enterprise, am I going to place Sir John Toppys—for a brief interval before his execution—in the seat of Willatopy.'

More than once during this horrible deliverance Roger Gatepath had essayed to stop her, but Madame refused to be interrupted. It pleased her to describe vividly the last act in the lawless drama, and she indulged her whim. Madame loves talk, almost as much as she loves action. But there is this difference. In action she is swift, precise, and shattering. In speech she is diffuse and interminable. Yet there are many less agreeable occupations than to sit opposite to that royal beauty, and to listen respectfully to her babble.

'You entirely misread our intentions,' said Gatepath severely, when Madame at last allowed him to get a word in. 'Do you suppose that Gatepaths—do you suppose that Sir John Toppys, Baronet, of—er—Wigan—do you suppose that the trustees of the

settled estates of Topsham would countenance the assassination of the lawful heir to an English peerage ? '

'I do,' said Madame calmly. 'What is more, I am quite sure of it.'

Gatepath collapsed. A great many people in their day have tried to humbug Madame Gilbert. All have failed and collapsed, as did Roger Gatepath.

Then, in her masterful fashion, at the moment when vague talk must cease, or anticipate vigorous action, Madame took charge of the destinies of Toppys.

'You went out to the Torres Straits, Mr. Gatepath, and not to waste time over polite verbiage, you made an ass of yourself. A thundering ass ! You philandered with the pretty pale-skinned Widow Toppys. She responded to your advances. It is of no use for you to shake your head. I know men, men of your susceptible age, and I know widows. I am one myself. Am I not always sweetly responsive to your fascinating middle-aged sex ? You aroused the jealousy of Willatopy, and he—a wise and dutiful son, who also appears to understand widows—put you to rout with his spear. Never again dare you appear on the island of Willatopy. Your head would infallibly decorate his baronial residence, and your body would be served in ceremonious cutlets. If Willatopy is a cannibal—which I take leave at present to doubt—he will devour his enemies as part of a religious ritual ; not for food. He would offer your head to his mistress as a *gage d'amour;* for no man is of any account in the South Seas as a lover, until he has at least one bleeding head to show for his affection. The island of Willatopy is closed to you ; no more will you exchange sweet nothings about the weather with the fair and frail Widow Toppys. But to me, all is open. If you and your accomplice, the Wigan baronet, are willing to pay my expenses on a scale adequate to a profiteer in war material, I will set sail for the island home of the twenty-eighth baron. If he is half-white in sentiment, and not altogether a woolly savage, I will mould him with these subtle fingers. I will be his shelter from hedge lawyers, bent upon thrusting him untimely into the dreary old House of Lords. If, as may happen, the heir of Topsham is definitely and finally impossible, I will do my best to move him—willing or unwilling—to some retreat, where he may be less easy of discovery by your rival practitioners, than in his present conspicuous residence. I gather that the Missionary Registers of Thursday

Island blazon his address and telephone number. I will do nothing seriously unlawful, nothing, that is, which could be proved against me to my incarceration. A spice of adventurous illegality adds zest to an enterprise. But I won't go to the scaffold or the prison for all the mouldy Toppyses who were ever hatched through the centuries. And though I accept nothing but limited liability, I will make a much more fruitful job of my island voyage than you did of yours. The widow will have no attractions for me, and if the Baron of Topsham and Madame Gilbert should become—*épris*—so much the easier will my task be made. Many men,' murmured Madame sadly, 'have given me their honest (or dishonest) hearts, and most of them have paid heavily for my apparent acceptance of the gift. There, Mr. Gatepath, it is more than you, or that bold, bad, baronet of Wigan deserves, but I have made you a fair sporting offer. I will go to the Torres Straits, though how in the world I am to get a passage is, for the moment, beyond me. All steamers are packed, and only those voyagers who have urgent business have a chance of a berth; an unemployed widow, bound upon a delicate undescribable mission, would be a poor "C 3".in the waiting-list.'

'Do not let that worry you,' cried Gatepath. 'I am, beyond all things, delighted by your offer. Sir John Toppys will be delighted. The Family of Toppys will be delighted. It is no small thing, Madame, to gain the regard and influence of the ancient and honourable House of Toppys. I accept your offer joyfully, and you need not calculate your expenses. The gold of Wigan will be poured into your lap. And as for the steamer passage, what care Gatepaths for passenger restrictions, now that the Admiralty have released the *Humming Top*? She is refitting at this moment at Cowes. You shall sail at your ease in her.'

'And what, please, is the *Humming Top*?' enquired Madame patiently.

'She is a turbine-engined yacht, built by Denny's of Dumbarton, and a perfect sea-boat. A thousand tons, Madame, and fitted like a summer palace. Not too small for comfort, and not too big for the coral reefs of Torres. She is a sea-home worthy even of Madame Gilbert.'

'That is the first really sensible speech that you have made to-day,' said Madame.

WEALTH AND WORKERS. II.

BEING THE CHRONICLE OF FURTHER DISCUSSIONS AT THE GOODWILL CLUB.

I.

PRESIDENT. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to welcome you back after the holidays. I hope you have all had a pleasant time?

MERCHANT. We managed to get through without a strike anyway.

WIDOW. Yes. Ever since the railway strike I have almost dreaded looking at my morning paper.

MERCHANT. That was a bad business indeed. But, thank goodness, the railways were being controlled by the Government or we should never have been able to cope with the situation.

SKILLED LABOURER. A great shame I call it. What business had the Government to interfere?

PRESIDENT. Well! Here is a strange situation! Here is Merchant thanking goodness for the nationalisation of railways and Skilled Labourer calling it a shame!

WIDOW. Aren't we rather getting off the point that we reached in our previous discussions?

BANKER. No. I don't think we are. If I remember rightly, the last thing we agreed about was that unreasonable profiteering and unreasonable strikes were both equally wrong. For they were both an endeavour by one section of the community to snatch unreasonable benefits from the rest of the community because special circumstances gave them a momentary chance of doing it. But we did not decide how you could stop them. Now I always thought that Skilled Labourer relied on nationalisation to do it, and I must say it does make me laugh to hear Merchant advocating nationalisation and Skilled Labourer objecting to a very good instance of it!

MERCHANT. No. I don't advocate it, but——

SKILLED LABOURER. I don't object to it, but——

PRESIDENT. Anyway, you will both agree, I am sure, that nationalisation gives the employer a greater power to resist strikes?

UNSKILLED LABOURER. Why?

PRESIDENT. Labour was able to make its voice heard in the State because it combined. And I think it was a very good thing that it did combine, because, on the whole, it was not always fairly treated in the past. But to cope with labour's increasing demands employers had to combine too. But they did not combine quite so well because they were competitors of each other.

MANUFACTURER. Yes; we must combine if we are to resist labour.

PRESIDENT. But when the State is the employer there is no competition and no need for combination, and all the resources of the State are available to resist intimidation by employees.

SKILLED LABOURER. Then labour must control the State.

WIDOW. How do you mean?

SKILLED LABOURER. Well—if labour had formed the Government when the railwaymen threatened to strike, it would have given them all they wanted.

UNSKILLED LABOURER. Yes, and we should have been able to demand the same minimum wage.

SKILLED LABOURER. You! Why you are only an unskilled labourer! You have no right to the same wages as we!

UNSKILLED LABOURER. I don't know about that. Anyway, with a Labour Government we should have got it!

SKILLED LABOURER. No, you wouldn't, because——

CLERK. We clerks, at any rate, are entitled to more, and with a Labour Government——

SKILLED LABOURER. But you are not labour!

CLERK. Not labour? Don't we work as hard as you?

SKILLED LABOURER. Not with your hands.

CLERK. Yes we do, and with our heads, too!

ACTOR. Well, so far as that goes, our hours are far longer than——

PRESIDENT. Goodness! You don't mean to say you are going to nationalise the stage, too!

UNSKILLED LABOURER. I think we ought to nationalise everything.

BANKER. Then the poor old Government will have to raise wages all round to please everybody.

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes, why not?

PRESIDENT. I think we thrashed that point out before. We all agreed—did we not?—that high wages are not to be reckoned in money, but depend upon their relation to the cost of living.

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes, that it true.

PRESIDENT. So whatever Government is in power it is still going to be bound by economic laws—is it not ?

MANUFACTURER. Yes. We must not forget that if the miners get higher wages and coal is more expensive, railways will cost more to run. If railways cost more to run they can't afford to pay higher wages unless they raise the rates, and if they raise the rates, goods will cost more to carry, and manufacturers can't afford to pay higher wages without raising the price of goods.

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes they can, by taking less profits.

PRESIDENT. Anyway, it is clear that it is not always in the interest of one section of labour that another section should get higher pay, is it not ?

SKILLED LABOURER. I suppose that is true, and even a Labour Government couldn't please everybody.

BANKER. So I suppose even a Labour Government might have to fight a strike if it were an unreasonable and an uneconomic one ?

SKILLED LABOURER. No. Why should the Government fight it ? It is not the business of the Government to take sides.

BANKER. But if that particular industry is nationalised, the Government would be the employer !

MERCHANT. Yes, and would be in a stronger position to defeat the strike than a private employer !

WIDOW. Well, it seems to me you have got into a rare tangle !

PRESIDENT. Isn't that because everyone is trying to look at the problem from his own particular standpoint ? I admit that *no individual section of the community ought to be unfairly treated by the rest of the community.*

CLERK. Hear, hear !

PRESIDENT. Do all agree ?

ALL. Yes.

PRESIDENT. Mr. Secretary, write that down in the book. And can't we also agree that *no individual section of the community should profit at the expense of the rest of the community ?*

ALL. Yes.

PRESIDENT. Mr. Secretary, write that down. Then, provided everyone is treated fairly, *what we have got to work for is the general prosperity of the whole community.*

ALL. Yes.

PRESIDENT. Mr. Secretary, write that down.

BANKER. And unless you have general prosperity, individual sections of the community won't be prosperous for long.

SKILLED LABOURER. Except at the expense of other sections of the community. That is the point.

BANKER. No, because——

PRESIDENT. Anyway, there may be two points to consider: Would nationalisation help general prosperity, or would it help to rectify any unfair treatment at present existing of particular sections of the community.

BANKER. The first point is the important one.

SKILLED LABOURER. No, the second is the important one.

PRESIDENT. Well, let us leave this question to our next meeting.

II.

PRESIDENT. If I remember rightly, ladies and gentlemen, we were discussing nationalisation at our last meeting, and we were rather diverted by the spectacle of Merchant thanking goodness that the railways were being run by the Government, and Skilled Labourer expressing his disgust at the fact, and I think we came to the conclusion that nationalisation would not necessarily be in the interest of labour?

SKILLED LABOURER. Why?

PRESIDENT. Because the State, as employer, *would be in a stronger position to resist strikes than private employers.*

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes, but if we had a Labour Government, it would see that labour got a fairer share of profits.

UNSKILLED LABOURER. Well, you did not seem to admit that *we* were entitled to higher wages last time!

BANKER. I think we agreed that it is not always in the interests of one section of labour that another section should get higher wages, and we said that even a Labour Government would be bound by economic laws, so that what we have got to work for is the general prosperity of the whole community. That is the point.

SKILLED LABOURER. No; the point is, Will nationalisation help to remedy injustice in special cases? That is the point.

PRESIDENT. We said both those points would have to be decided. Let us take yours first, Skilled Labourer. But would you propose to nationalise everything?

SKILLED LABOURER. Well, that would not be possible al

at once, of course. But we ought to nationalise the means of production.

WIDOW. I don't know what you mean by that.

BANKER. Nor does anyone.

PRESIDENT. Anyway, they would be industries; I suppose; upon which all other industries and the whole industrial life of the community depend?

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes.

MERCHANT. And if they are penalised, then the whole country is affected?

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes.

MERCHANT. Then in the case of such industries the Government is bound to interfere, whether they are nationalised or not?

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes—I think so.

MERCHANT. But would not the Government be much more likely to be impartial if it were not the employer?

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes, I suppose its interests really would be more against labour if it were the employer. But if it is not the employer it has no real power of interference.

BANKER. Then you must give it power.

MERCHANT. Men never will stick to agreements.

SKILLED LABOURER. Masters never will stick to agreements.

PRESIDENT. That is because there is so much mutual distrust. But it seems to me that your real point, Skilled Labourer, is: Would the State make a better employer than private individuals?

SKILLED LABOURER. Oh! some private employers are all right, I admit. But some aren't!

MANUFACTURER. Yes, I agree. That is the trouble. Bad employers are at the bottom of half our difficulties, or, rather, were once. But there are lots of good ones and they do take a personal interest in their employees. I don't see how the State ever could.

CLERK. No. One Government Department dismissed a whole lot of us the other day without any reason and without any notice—and, of course, there was no one we could go to. You can't possibly get at anyone in authority in a Government Department. It's too big. But, anyway, Government wages are never anything to boast about.

PRESIDENT. I think there is no doubt that *close and friendly personal relations between employer and employee are the best guarantee of fair play*.

ALL. Yes.

PRESIDENT. Mr. Secretary, write that down.

SKILLED LABOURER. But what about the big companies?

MERCHANT. I must say everything seems to be getting into the hands of trusts nowadays. We merchants are about the only people who are not combining.

BANKER. Isn't that because you employ comparatively little labour? The more labour combines to fight, the more the other side must combine.

MANUFACTURER. That's true in a way—but, of course, combination gets rid of competition.

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes. That is just the trouble. You form great trusts and keep up prices and make enormous profits. We get the high prices and you get the profits!

BANKER. Well—but the State as employer would be the biggest trust of all, and there would be nothing to stop it making enormous profits.

SKILLED LABOURER. But the State would not be allowed to make profits.

BANKER. H'm.

MERCHANT. It couldn't anyway. It would be sure to muddle everything.

PRESIDENT. Oh! That's what people always say about the State.

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes. It's nonsense. If the State controlled the whole of an industry think how it could avoid waste!

BANKER. Heavens!

SKILLED LABOURER. Well, take the railways. If the State owned all the trucks you would not get half the overlapping nor half the empty trucks standing about everywhere. Not half the overlapping—that's what it is!

MANUFACTURER. Well, that's exactly why we form trusts and combinations. Not to raise prices, but to work more economically. So it seems, Skilled Labourer, that you must be in favour of trusts!

PRESIDENT. Does not this bring us to our second point? Would nationalisation be a more economical way of working and so benefit the whole community? Let us discuss this at our next meeting.

III.

PRESIDENT. Ladies and gentlemen, at our last meeting we came to the conclusion, if I remember rightly, that the State would not necessarily make a better employer than private individuals or companies. We agreed that, as the owner of an industry, it would be less likely to intervene impartially in industrial disputes, that the personal element would be lacking in the relations between employer and employed, and that it would be more difficult for employees to get into personal touch with those in authority. So that I think it follows that whether nationalisation would be a good or a bad thing economically, it would not necessarily be a good thing from the point of view of labour. But when we came to the economic question, we found Skilled Labourer praising the trust system because it meant centralised organisation and the prevention of overlapping.

SKILLED LABOURER. No. I never praised the trusts; I said if the Government owned the railways it would prevent overlapping.

MANUFACTURER. Yes, and I said that it is to prevent overlapping that we form trusts.

SKILLED LABOURER. No, it isn't; it's to make enormous profits. It is not fair that such big profits should be made.

UNSKILLED LABOURER. Unless we got some of them.

BANKER. Yes; I think that is the point. Big profits generally mean good organisation, and they bring wealth to the whole community. There would be nothing wrong about big profits if they were fairly distributed.

WIDOW. I don't quite see how big profits in one industry bring wealth to the whole community.

BANKER. Well, first of all, a very large part of those profits is made by the sale of goods abroad, and that brings money into the country which is spent in all sorts of ways. You must remember that the more things we can sell to other countries, the more we can afford to buy from other countries.

SKILLED LABOURER. Why?

BANKER. Because if we only bought things from other countries all our money would gradually go out of the country to pay for them—and soon we should not be able to buy even enough food to live on—as we agreed in one of our earlier discussions. But when we sell goods to other countries we get back money for them,

to spend either in this country or in buying things from other countries which we can't produce ourselves.

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes, I see.

BANKER. Well, that is one way in which big profits in one industry may benefit the whole community. Then, again, as we saw, big profits may be the result of good organisation and the prevention of overlapping; it does not necessarily mean that they are the result of high prices. In fact a trust can often afford, at any rate, to sell its productions cheaper than smaller producers.

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes, and that is why you ought to have nationalisation, because things would be done cheaper.

PRESIDENT. That is, of course, the whole point.

MERCHANT. Perhaps in some cases that might be true. The post office, for instance, and even, possibly, the railways and the mines.

MANUFACTURER. But I don't see where you are going to stop.

UNSKILLED LABOURER. Why stop?

MANUFACTURER. Well, but there is another side to the picture. Economic production does not only depend on organisation, it also depends on effort.

UNSKILLED LABOURER. How?

MANUFACTURER. To get the maximum production you must have everybody working as hard as they can and thinking as hard as they can. It's just the extra ounce of work and thought that does it.

MERCHANT. Yes, and that requires effort.

SKILLED LABOURER. I suppose that is true. It is easy enough to do things fairly well, the difficulty is to do them better than other people. But, after all, why should one want to do them better than other people?

PRESIDENT. That is just the point. We must, at any rate, do them better than foreigners—as we have already seen—if we want the community to be prosperous.

BANKER. And we must do them as well as possible if we want to have cheap production and be able to lower prices.

WIDOW. But I don't quite see how this comes into the question of nationalisation.

MANUFACTURER. Well, how are you going to get that extra effort out of people?

PRESIDENT. By the way, does everyone agree that *to get extra production you must have extra effort?*

SKILLED LABOURER. And organisation.

BANKER. But good organisation means extra effort too. It is hard work.

PRESIDENT. Does everyone agree that to get extra production you must have extra effort ?

ALL. Yes.

PRESIDENT. Mr. Secretary, write that down. Now, how are we going to get that extra effort ?

MERCHANT. Well, first of all, you must have competition. Unless you are competing against other people you will soon get slack.

PRESIDENT. Does everyone agree to that ?

ALL. Yes.

PRESIDENT. Mr. Secretary, write down—*to get extra effort you must have competition.*

SKILLED LABOURER. But why should you bother to compete or to make the extra effort if you are going to get nothing out of it ?

WIDOW. For the good of the whole community.

SKILLED LABOURER. H'm, possibly. But I don't think many of us are likely to work much harder for something so far away as that !

PRESIDENT. That's the pity of it.

SKILLED LABOURER. Well, it isn't natural. Not yet, anyway. You might just as well say we ought not to ask for higher wages for the sake of the whole community.

MANUFACTURER. We might.

SKILLED LABOURER. No. If you want a man to work, you must show him he has got something to gain by it.

BANKER. Then you must agree that *you must give people a chance of making profits if you want to get the extra effort out of them.*

WIDOW. I am afraid that is true.

PRESIDENT. It would seem that this is another point against nationalisation. People in Government Departments never feel the incentive to extra effort which is given by the hope of profit.

SKILLED LABOURER. Well, the State will have to make profits after all, I suppose.

MERCHANT. Then it would be the worst kind of trust that ever was !

BANKER. And I don't think it would help much either, because

the profits would go to the State and not to the people from whom the extra effort is required.

SKILLED LABOURER. Ah! But that is the whole point. The profits never do go to the people from whom the extra effort is required.

MANUFACTURER. Extra effort is required from management too!

SKILLED LABOURER. The profit ought to be shared with everyone from whom extra effort is required.

PRESIDENT. Yes, that is true. But have we not got rather off the point? Let us see what we have decided. Does it not come to this? *Nationalisation is not necessarily in the interests of employees as against employers*, because the State is in a stronger position to fight strikes, nor does it necessarily make the best employer since the personal element is lacking. *Nationalisation of some industries may mean better organisation and so help cheap production.*

BANKER. Yes; but that is a matter for experts and not for political parties or class factions to decide.

PRESIDENT. *But it does not necessarily mean cheaper production, because, without competition and the hope of profit, extra effort will not be produced.*

SKILLED LABOURER. Yes; but if you want extra effort from everyone, you must give everyone something to work for.

PRESIDENT. Yes, that is going to be the solution of our troubles, I am sure. We will discuss that at our next meeting.

E. DE STEIN.

THE MARCH OF THE RAGGED NOBLEMEN.[1]

THE FORMATION OF THE VOLUNTEER ARMY IN SOUTH RUSSIA, NOVEMBER, 1917—NOVEMBER, 1919.

BY MAJOR ROBERT DAVIS, AMERICAN RED CROSS COMMISSION TO SOUTH RUSSIA.

'There may be those who inquire whether the writing of a narrative such as this properly belongs within the function of an officer of the American Red Cross. But the Red Cross is more than a distributor of emergency relief. It is a promoter of international good-will. It is a world market of magnanimity. There are millions of people to-day whose only knowledge of America has been gained through contact with the American Red Cross. . . . It is in this larger function, as an instrument of acquaintance and comity between nations, that the American Red Cross uses its channels of information to introduce to the free people of America a gallant company of distant men, who love freedom as they do, and who are daily enduring pain, that freedom may be the inheritance of their children.'

I.

BEFORE the vivid lights fade into the neutrals of history, before the romance is overlaid with the dust on the shelves of public libraries, someone should write of the March of the Ragged Noblemen. Of the partisans of the invincible ideal. Of the chiefs who first knew how to be subordinates. Of men who, having lost all but honour, knew that they yet possessed enough to serve their land greatly—who could not see the end, but who, with high hearts, began the adventure. Of the army of three thousand, who, rolling onward, constantly dying and constantly renewed into life, in twelve months lost by death thirty thousand men: who marched out upon the wild steppe, upon the frozen earth of winter, with all their wealth in the kits upon their backs, but

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carrying, as an invisible aura, all that remained of the soul of Russia's army. Gentlemen all, in torn raiment, with a feather on the hat to hide the hole.

He who marched at their head had endowments as celestial as Joan of Arc. Those who followed him merit to rank with the Roundheads of Oliver Cromwell, the Colonial Farmers of Bunker Hill, the Red Shirts of Garibaldi. It is good to write of them, with lasting ink on white paper, before the colours grow dim in the memory, before those who dictate our children's knowledge shall have assigned these men their small, dry niche in the time when the whole world was in turmoil, before the actual voices of those who walked the 'Icy March,' and who still fight, shall have joined the comrades who have proceeded them to the intrepid end.

II.

November, 1917, that sombre month! Russia is crumbling; the theories of Kerensky have served to dissolve the army, and his Provisional Government can dominate nothing. By their audacious coup, the Bolshevists have dismissed the Duma—those who come, demanding power as representatives of the people, have dismissed the sole organ of the people's will. No hope remains of winning the war, nor even of a creditable surrender. The cities are nests of bedlam. Russia has broken her plighted word with the Allies, and the war on the Western Front is prolonged for a year, maybe entirely lost. The economic system is shattered. Credit is gone. Kerensky has opened the jails for political prisoners. The banished return. Siberia is unlocked. The tide of revolution creeps higher and higher, until the stones of the ancient social structure are being submerged in the flood of collective lawlessness. The widening circles of violence, from Petrograd and Moscow, have run to the rims of the empire, until there is revolt on the shores of the White and Black Seas.

It is November, 1917, and all the factors of disorder are in action. Early in the month two events occur—simultaneously, but at opposite ends of Russia—little in themselves, but crammed with significance for the future of a national health and discipline.

Behold the two huge trifles of early November: an old worn man in a civilian suit descended from the train at Novocherkassk, north of Rostov, in the Don provinces; a half-dozen men, branded as traitors by Kerensky, escaped from prison in Petrograd. The

worn man was destined to be the brain, and one of the escaped prisoners was destined to be the heart, of the movement which for a time was to emancipate South Russia.

The worn man in the second-hand clothes had been chief-of-staff of the most extensive military organisation in the history of the world—an organisation which, during the Great War, had mobilised eighteen and a half million men, and had lost, by wounds, sickness, death and capture, nine million of them. It was General Alexiev. While no one was thinking of saving Russia, while each thought only of saving himself, he had come to organise an army of volunteer patriots. He had come single-handed and empty-handed, without resources of money, men or material. He had spent all his life in the Russian army, and now that army had disintegrated into demoralised atoms. He had received the highest positions which a man may receive of his country, and now had come for the last task of his life, the assembling and equipping of all who had a life left to give for Russia. He had come to this corner of the empire as a sanctuary, as in November the Don was not yet infected with the virus of revolution.

In the jail delivery, the chief figure was General Korniloff, but there were with him Generals Lukomsky, Romanoffsky, Markov, Erdeli, and Denikin.

Who was this Korniloff, who escaped from Bukhoff prison, and whose name is reverenced by the Volunteer Army? He was a Cossack, supposed to be a descendant of Yermak, the Cossack conqueror of Siberia, who offered his conquests to Ivan the Terrible, Duke of Moscow. In 1915, he had been the commander of the Souvarof Division, whom he led against the Austrians in Galicia. With a handful of men he made a heroic resistance in the Carpathian mountains at Iula, and, still fighting, was captured. Disguised as a workman, in company with a Czech soldier, he escaped from the prison camp. His perfect knowledge of German helped them to pass through Budapest. They were tracked, and for twenty days he wandered on foot through the Hungarian forest, eating herbs and berries. In August, 1916, he arrived in Roumania in the clothing of a teamster, and was given a triumphant reception at Galatz. For his dash and daring the Czar gave him what was called 'the only command worthy of him'—the famous 'Wild Division' of Cossack horsemen.

He and his Division were always found where death wore its most glorious, pathetic and desperate mask. During Kerensky's

Revolution, he was commander-in-chief of the Revolutionary troops, and in August, 1917, when Riga had been surrendered to the Germans, he electrified Petrograd by his public appeal to the people. The papers published the words as he uttered them upon the cathedral steps:—

'Soldiers, one hope remains to us. Let us return to the front. Between the Germans and us, between death and us, nothing is left but the melting barrier of the Baltic ice.' . . .

Kerensky's infirm policies discouraged him, and when neither the revolutionary mob nor the disbanding army heeded his appeal, he laid an ultimatum before Kerensky. Of Kerensky he asked full power to act. 'Give me full authority,' he demanded, 're-establish the death sentence, dismiss the Soviets, and I will still save Russia!'

The ultimatum fell as a thunderbolt. Korniloff had at first been partisan to the liberal ideas; but seeing the danger of excesses, and placing the salvation of Russia above the success of the Revolution, he realised that all was lost in the rear, that the people were cowering, that they would capitulate on any terms. Russia needed a leader who could kindle imagination, who would act, who could personalise the nation's hope. Standing in the stirrups of his Cossack horse, with the 'Wild Division' at his back, he faced Kerensky. He spoke as the commander-in-chief of the Revolutionary Army: 'Give me full power, and I can still save Russia!'

A tragic rivalry existed between these two men, Kerensky and Korniloff, the patriotism of neither of whom could be questioned. Korniloff cared for the saving of Russia, and cared only for the Revolution as a means to the great end. Kerensky was the 'chief speaker of the Revolution,' Korniloff the impetuous leader of troops. Kerensky had allowed the Soviets to democratise the army by reducing the officer to the ideas and status of the common soldier. Korniloff had another idea of democracy in the army, he had made his Souvarof Division an unparalleled *corps d'élite*, not by bringing down the officer to the level of the soldier, but by raising the morale and brain quality of the soldier to that of the officer. The two men, the one trained as a lawyer, the other as a cavalry general—the one in his dictator's chair, the other in the stirrup of his horse—each intent upon the salvation of Russia, faced one another.

Kerensky refused the three points of Korniloff's ultimatum. In an all-night session of the Ministry, one by one the chiefs of the Government resigned. By morning Kerensky remained alone,

arbiter of Russia. He branded Korniloff as a traitor and an outlaw, and put him, and the officers who took his part, in Bukhoff prison.

But the quick movement of Korniloff's life was not halted by the prison. The Bukhoff fortress was, upon alternate days, guarded by the St. George Cavaliers, who were favourable to Kerensky. But there was a company of Cossacks recruited in the oases of the Trans-Caucasus, from the plains of Azerbaijan, to whom Korniloff was like a god. On a night that the St. George Cavaliers were on duty elsewhere, this company, the 'Tekeen,' opened the prison and rescued Korniloff, Denikin, Lukomsky, Romanoffsky, Erdeli, Elsner, and Markov.

The Tekeen knew the forest roads, they had extra horses, and the company galloped away. Passing through a thicket, a branch penetrated Korniloff's eye. He made no remark. In the morning, a comrade, seeing him wipe his eye, said 'Is anything the matter, General?' He replied, 'I think I have lost my eye.' The use of the eye had been destroyed.

The Tekeen were forced to cross a railroad; but Kerensky, guessing their route, was patrolling the line with searchlights. Waiting for the passage of one train, the Tekeen bolted for the track. The company almost crossed unobserved, but the next train approached. The last horses were seen, and the alarm given. In simple men action is quick; they think and act, and do not debate as do the educated. In the emergency the Tekeen company made an instant decision. They turned their horses loose, discarded their uniforms, dressed as workmen and peasants, and disbanded. Every man was to fend for himself, and get to Rostov the best he could. Many of them never reached their journey's end, being recognised on the way and shot. The soldiers, their officers, the generals they had rescued, all fared alike. They became penniless, hungry, and ragged; but the spirit did not wince, and many did drift into the Don.

In December 1917, the month after General Alexiev's arrival at Novocherkassk, Korniloff, in a mechanic's working shirt, reached Rostov, the neighbouring town. Denikin, Romanoffsky, Lukomsky, and the others, came in the clothing of firemen, chauffeurs, and labourers. By a natural division of work, Alexiev became responsible for all questions of a financial and political nature, and Korniloff became commander-in-chief of troops.

In December all were at work. Tales began to ripple along the underground wires of communication that Alexiev and

Korniloff were alive, that they were together. All in whom a Russian heart still beat were roused by the tidings. That these two were alive and together was a promise of good. In the provinces held by the Bolshevists, legends were whispered from mouth to mouth of 'the men of Korniloff' that somewhere existed, though few knew where, and none knew how numerous. From the corners of the land volunteers filtered in. Agents were dispatched to raise money and recruits among the faithful. There was witchery in Korniloff's name and Alexiev's known talents. Schoolboys came, hardly strong enough to carry a rifle. Men who had held high rank in the old army came, and bankers, lawyers, and doctors. All were exhausted physically, needing to be clothed and drilled, but all were willing to stake existence on what Alexiev should decide, and to go wherever Korniloff should lead.

But now the Don was breaking up. The fever of revolution was making tragedies in the stanitza, the sons were Bolshevists and the brothers Maximalists, and the fathers counter-revolutionists. Fathers knew their sons no longer. Regiments returning from the front spread the bacteria of indifference and brutality. The Sixth Regiment of the Don Cossacks, having returned to Novocherkassk, were presented with 400 rubles per man as a tribute because of their opposition to the Bolshevists; but having pocketed this gift, they like one man went to their homes and refused to fight. Returning regiments sold all their regimental gear, arms, artillery, horses, clothing. The comrade-colonel of another Don regiment auctioned off the historic regimental ensign for 150 rubles.

In the villages, violent hates smouldered. One met a sledge with two men upon it. 'Tell me, Cossack, where is the stanitza?' 'I am not a Cossack,' was the reply, 'but my brother here is one. I am a Bolshevist. May your Korniloff be damned!'

The Bolshevists claimed to have 300,000 armed sympathisers in the Don province, and when Kaledine, Hetman of the Don, asked the Volunteers to defend Novocherkassk and Rostov, Korniloff knew that it would mean the sacrifice of his little army and refused. By daily arduous growth, the army in January numbered 3000 cadets, high officers, schoolboys, professional men; but they were surrounded by an ever-tightening circle of enemies who outnumbered them twenty to one. The Volunteers had little ammunition, sometimes but one rifle for ten men, and were without uniforms, artillery, wireless apparatus or

medical supplies. In January they were forced to retreat from Novocherkassk to Rostov, further south. Broken-hearted by the disloyalty of his people, Kaledine, who held the important post of Ataman of the Cossacks, the elected head of eleven tribes, committed suicide. He was a true friend to the Volunteers. Unable to prevent the civil war among his people, he used his death as a last means to provoke a reaction. In February, the city of Rostov was no longer tenable. There were treacherous outbreaks in the city itself and much sniping. From two directions well-equipped armies were advancing. The Don, to which Korniloff and Alexiev had come for a base in which to organise their army without interruption, was no longer sympathetic or even neutral. The Volunteers were not yet in a position to fight effectively. Alexiev and Korniloff were working eighteen hours a day to hasten the moment when they could take the offensive, but it had not yet struck. In early February, discretion required that they should no longer jeopardise their existence by remaining in Rostov.

III.

On the evening of February 9, the entity that will be known to history as the 'Volunteer Army' is born. It is no longer to remain in the quasi-retirement of organisation. Forced to evacuate Rostov by the threat of annihilation at the hands of superior numbers, it takes the field. There is but one road to security, the road to the territory of the Kuban Cossacks, which is not yet in the control of the Bolshevists.

At five o'clock of the winter evening Korniloff's staff gathers at Paramonov's house. Each carries his bag, his bedding, his weapons, and his staff for the journey. They do not know their destination further than Olginskaia, eighteen miles; beyond that point is uncertainty. They leave a wealthy, comfortable city for the inhospitable prairie. They are entering treacheries, privations and pains. Without supplies, provisions, medical corps, or an S.O.S., they tramp away. And when the lights of the city fade behind them, the Volunteer Army is in existence, as an operating unit—an army no larger than a regiment.

Whatever may be their deficiencies of material, I defy one to name an army, which, man for man, can match that column in character of its personnel. At the head walks the reserved old

man who has been the executive chief of eighteen million men, and at his side the dark man who is one of the two or three hypnotic commanders developed during the whole course of the Great War. Generals who have formerly commanded armies are here commanding companies. It is an army of officers, of intellectuals, who fall in behind Alexiev and Korniloff. The rifle on the shoulder of each reduces all to high equality.

The officers wear their decorations, and, in a grim coquetry, continue the etiquette of the court, repeating playfully the forms which would mean torture if overheard by their adversaries. 'My dear Prince, may I ask what hour it is?' 'I think, Baron, it has just turned nine o'clock.'

Glance down a roster of a sample company:

1 Colonel,
4 Captains,
12 Second Captains,
30 Lieutenants,
23 Sub-Lieutenants,
47 Praporchtiks (Adjutants),
3 Cadets,
3 Volunteer Soldiers.

In the column marches the Korniloff shock regiment, which was formed in June, 1917, at Korniloff's instigation, as a protest against the wholesale desertions from the Kerensky army. The ardour of the regiment was not favourably observed by Kerensky, and it was disbanded. The elements, however, have filtered through the lines individually, and, reunited at Rostov with their patron, still possess their flag, 32 machine guns and 600,000 cartridges. In the column there is also the Regiment of St. George, composed of members of the Czar's celebrated battalion of St. George, each man of whom has been cited for bravery. There is the Gershelman Division of Cavalry, composed of officers, cadets, and Cossacks. There are three battalions of officers, commanded by General Markov.

IV.

At Olginskaia they pause two days and take account of their more immediate necessities. A council of war is held to determine upon their destination. The Cossacks of the Kuban have not been touched with revolutionism to the same degree as the Cossacks of the

Don. It is a rich land, the Circassian mountaineers are pronounced counter-Bolshevists, and there is the likelihood that new units may be recruited. It is agreed to make Ekaterinodar, capital of the Kuban Government, the objective of the campaign. This city is 200 miles away. It requires stout hearts and a Korniloff fatalism to undertake this march in the depth of a Russian winter. The problems of food, of ammunition, and of care for the wounded, cannot be solved in advance; they must simply be borne, a day at a time. The enemy opposes their progress. Each day there is advance-guard and rear-guard action. The wounded cannot be left behind, as there is no base where they can be treated, neither can they be abandoned to the savagery of the guerilla bands. The numbers of the disabled keep increasing, and the ambulance carts are placed in the middle of the column for simultaneous protection on all four sides. The wounded soon occupy a thousand carts and the train is three versts in length. The route lies through mud, swamp and snow, and the wagon train can average no more than seven miles a day. There are forty-two distinct military actions in forty days. But always the Volunteers are cheered by the hope of better weather, rest, food, and moral support, when they shall reach their goal, Ekaterinodar. Their supplies are renewed by what they capture from the enemy.

Korniloff is a complete and perfect commander. His skill saves the army in overwhelming situations. He is a strategist, and is also conversant with the pyschology of his undisciplined foe. He marches at the head of the column, covering the versts with his free stride. He is instinctively at the spot where stamina is especially demanded. The army follows him blindly—running, halting, swimming, charging, as he sets the pace. At the battle of Lazgenka, he and Alexiev, with rifles in their hands, charged at the head of the column. From the standpoint of good organisation, it is imprudent for the two men on whom everything depends to risk their lives needlessly; but from the standpoint of infusing their followers with confidence and boldness, during the hours when hardships are almost insupportable, their conduct is justified.

With this Siberian Cossack, Korniloff, courage verges on folly. His blithe temerity is even the cause of disaster. He is not made for the tenacious, slow, trench warfare. It is the grain of madness which characterises his action, which is just the necessary thing to dissipate the hesitations of those who reason too much. During

the lifetime of this man, twenty thousand officers, who loved him well, paid for their constancy with their lives.

At times, when ammunition is lacking, an officers' battalion, in open order, rifles slung on their backs, advance upon the horde of the enemy. The stupid mob gapes with astonishment and curiosity and finally runs, leaving shells, cartridges and rifles, wherewith the army can renew its stores. Such exploits are demonstrations of pure nerve—and incomparable morale.

By March the Volunteers are fifty miles from Ekaterinodar, labouring across the steppe, repelling daily attacks, sustained by the vision of their welcome in the Kuban capital. They receive a shock which Korniloff's magnetism can barely counteract: news is brought that Ekaterinodar has surrendered to the Bolshevists, and that the Kuban government has fled to the mountains. The Volunteers have been two months on the road, without adequate food, by day and by night the object of attack. They are worn to the thin edge of their strength. The fall of Ekaterinodar blasts the remnant of their optimism. It results also in a change of campaign. The only sanctuary open to them is the foothills of the Caucasus, the valleys of the anti-Bolshevist mountaineers, to the south-east of Ekaterinodar, toward Ust-Labinskaia. By this manœuvre the army is rescued from the danger into which the surrender of Ekaterinodar places it.

It is a comment upon the primitive equipment with which the Volunteers are making war, that the defenders of the Kuban, a force of 2500 men, under General Erdeli and General Pokrofsky, are within forty miles of them from March 1 to March 11, without either body being able to locate the other. Neither army has wireless, airplanes, telephone, telegraph or motors, and roads hardly exist. During these eleven days each army knows of the other's presence, and is anxious to join its ally.

The taking of Novo-Dmitriyevskaia, a village which the united forces presently occupy, will remind Americans of Washington's crossing of the Delaware and his surprise of the Hessians at Trenton. The first officers' regiment under General Markov is leading. From morning till night a drenching rain has fallen, and the volunteers have travelled twelve miles across swampy ground, knee-deep in water. In the afternoon an icy wind arises. Their clothing stiffens with ice. Men can hardly hold rifles in their hands. At 5 P.M. they arrive at the southern branch of the Kuban river, swollen by the rain and dotted with floating ice. As the half-

frozen detachment halts, their commander, General Markov, plunges into the stream shouting 'It is cold, but come along.' After him splash the officers through the darkness, holding rifles and ammunition over their heads. A portion of the troops are carried across on horses, being too numb to stand against the current. In the village on the opposite bank, the Bolshevists, comfortably certain that not even the mad Korniloff will fight on such a howling night, are installed in the houses, around blazing stoves and well-furnished tables. The Volunteers, at sight of the fires and food, become savage with desire and resolution. Few of the Bolshevists escape. The stanitza is occupied almost without loss, and throughout the night the steaming and eating Volunteers rejoice.

On the whole, however, the advance is attended with severe loss, because of the enemy's superiority in artillery, the bitter weather, and the impossibility of giving medical care to the wounded. From day to day the stores must be replenished by plunder.

The combined army decide upon a prompt attack and advances with confidence upon Ekaterinodar. With the addition of the Kuban Cossacks, the Volunteers number 7000 men. The battle opens on March 26, 1918, the army having 8 guns and 700 shells. During the four days of the battle, the Bolshevists fire 10,000 shells each day. The losses of the Volunteers are staggering, averaging per regiment about seventy per cent. Seasoned fighters are replaced by recruits. Officers on whom Korniloff depends fall by the score.

On the morning of April 1, the last ammunition is issued—two cartridges to a man. Even then no one doubts the ultimate victory. Korniloff is preparing a strategy for the morning.

Before daylight on April 1 the fates strike the little army an irretrievable blow. Korniloff is killed. A shell explodes in his bedroom. His headquarters are located at 'The Farm,' an eminence outside Ekaterinodar which gives a panorama of the city. The adobe house has been an obvious artillery target, but Korniloff could not be persuaded to move his quarters. There is in him a strain of fatalism. Years before a gipsy soothsayer has predicted that he will die at sixty-three—and he has accepted her words as gospel, giving no thought thereafter to death, exposure or pain, his mind being fixed upon the rigid fact that nothing can kill him before he attains the age of sixty-three. No one will believe that he is dead. The Cossacks refuse to put the desolate fact into

words. Simply pointing their fingers to the sky, they repeat 'Korniloff is there.'

It has been agreed among the staff that in the event of Korniloff's disability, Denikin shall without discussion become commander. So great is the shock of Korniloff's loss, that it is useless to continue the attack upon Ekaterinodar. The Volunteers are being slaughtered. The number of bed-wounded amounts to 1200. In the officers' regiment, twenty-five men remain to a company. Denikin's first act is to extricate the remnants of his command and to retreat to the north-east.

And so went the valiant spirit who so well communicated his own incandescent flame. The Volunteer Army was Korniloff's creation. Immaculate in his honesty, legendary in his courage, unshakable in his faith in the future of Russia and in her historic rôle; this honesty, courage and faith, known to others, were the secret of his power.

On the second night, in a lonely spot off the main road, they buried him. The earth of the grave was smoothed that the enemy should not discover and desecrate it. One priest knew the spot. The Bolshevists did not rest until they found the priest. They tortured him, but he would not tell where Korniloff was laid. They tortured his wife, but she would not tell. Then they tortured their children in sight of the man and his wife, and the mother told. The Bolshevists disinterred Korniloff, they tied his remains to the tail of a horse, and they dragged him through the streets of Ekaterinodar. The commissaries spat upon him and burned him, and ended the orgy with unspeakable insults. So childish was their hatred of the dead body of the man who in life was a giant whom they could not touch.

V.

After the disasters at Ekaterinodar, the most practical road open to the Volunteers was to the north-east, towards Stavropol. Safety, and opportunity to reorganise, awaited them on the Kalmuck and Astrakan steppes. The revolutionaries conducted their operations along the railway lines, where, with little labour or peril, their armored trains could carry them, and where their artillery could be employed with a minimum of effort. As the enemy had the advantage in the material aids of transportation, communication and equipment, the terrain where the railways were

closest was his stronghold. To reach the safety of the Astrakan territory it was necessary that Denikin should use finesse to lead his wagons across three railways, patrolled by armoured trains, which barred the way. The train of farm-carts, groaning on their wooden axles, extended seven versts, ploughing through the mud when the sun shone, and rattling over the ruts which each night congealed.

The first railway was crossed at Medvidinskaia, the convoy passing in safety while General Markov stood at the station telephone, impersonating the Bolshevist guard and giving false information; the second line was crossed at Zhuravskaia, upon a starless night, General Erdeli's cavalry making a decoy attack which drew the armoured trains to a distant point; the third railway, at Tikhoretsk-Kavkaskaia, was crossed while the station watchman, with a pistol at his head, kept repeating over the wire 'All is well; no sign of the Korniloffski.' The sound of the drivers whipping their horses was almost audible through the telephone upon that night of April 7.

The ordeal of the 'Icy March' was now passed. Spring weather was at hand. The wounded could be left behind in friendly settlements to convalesce. With the retreating Volunteers marched members of the Rada, or elective assembly of the Kuban Cossacks, who urged able-bodied men to enlist. Through their official conscription, hundreds of recruits were added. Everywhere were evidences that the peasants and Cossacks were tired of Bolshevist misrule, that they had discovered that the glib promises of the professional agitators were impossible of fulfillment. An emphatic proof that the tide had turned was given on April 15, when a band of Don Cossacks presented themselves, representing fourteen villages, who offered co-operation with the Korniloffski, and begged support in driving the already hated administration from their homes.

Astonishing news reached the Volunteers when first they got into touch with the telegraph; that there had been a counter-revolution in Taganrog, Rostov and Novorcherkassk; that there was everywhere a precipitate retreat of the Reds; that South Russia was in the grip of Germany's mailed fist; that the disgrace of the Brest-Litovsk treaty had been perpetrated. The new Hetman of the Don, who had been placed in power by Germany, invited Denikin to co-operate with him against the Bolshevists; but, however tempting this offer seemed from a material standpoint,

it would have meant a partnership with Germany. Denikin, after consultation with his staff, refused. It should be said, to the honour of the Volunteer Army, that they, despite tempting offers, did not then or afterward treat with Germany.

Denikin was uncertain as to his future line of campaign. The Don was cleared of the Bolshevists, but it was now in the hands of Germany. It was still held by a hostile power. Behind him was the defeat at Ekaterinodar, still occupied by the Reds. In front of him was the Don, which could not be entered save in conflict with Germany, a foe for which he was as yet no match. On the whole, he accepted the offers of support from the now sobered Cossacks of both the north and the south provinces, and chose the alternative of a return campaign to free the Kuban.

Alexiev and Denikin worked intensely, preparing for the new movement, being at their desks in Metchetinskaia before daylight, and seldom quitting until midnight. They accumulated supplies, to equip and drill the patriots who thronged from all the provinces of Russia. Armoured cars, motors, the machinery of war, item by item, were acquired. Two thousand men arrived in a body, under Colonel Drozdowsky, hauling eight guns, *who had marched* 1260 *miles from Roumania* to throw in their lot with those who perpetuated the tradition of Korniloff. The chiefs breathed more easily, the height of the storm had been weathered. The continuance of the army was assured.

By June, 1918, they had 12,000 men; by October, 100,000, holding a front of 240 miles. Alexiev had moved back to Novocherkassk, his original base, and his agents collected funds, enrolled recruits, purchased supplies, under the eyes of the Bolshevists and Germans. Alexiev and Denikin consistently refused to enter into relations with Germany.

The second march upon Ekaterinodar was launched in July, with the stern determination to avenge Korniloff's death. After a three days' battle, the town capitulated. Alexiev entered the city, and in a voice which seldom betrayed emotion, thanked the troops for their brilliant and heroic devotion. He stood in the cathedral square, facing the building in which had been established the permanent hospital of the American Red Cross for the Caucasus. At the close of the military review, the religious exaltation of the spectacle cannot be imprisoned in words. The square was choked with people, singing '*Memoriam Aeternam*,' in memory of the dead who had offered their lives upon the altar

of love. With rifles shining, with heads bare, the entire population, led by their bishop and his clergy, slowly prostrated themselves to the earth in thanksgiving to God.

The ashes of Korniloff had been dispersed by the wind, but the very fact that his body had no assignable place of repose gave him a brighter fame. Korniloff was everywhere—the dust of the Kuban was everywhere Korniloff's grave. Spontaneously the people left the square and took the road to the farm-house on the hill where he was killed. There again they knelt. A chapel is being built upon this spot, as a place of pilgrimage for the sons of those who adored him.

Settling down in Ekaterinodar, Alexiev and Denikin began the organisation of army routine. They occupied town after town—Armavir, Maikop, Eisk, Novorossisk—which opened the sea-road to the outside world, closed for four years. Every road of retreat for the Bolshevists in the Caucasus was shut, except the railroad to Vladikavkas. Tens of thousands of wagons, loaded with the families and loot of the Bolshevist sympathisers, crept in wavering lines along the track, and were lost upon the trails to Astrakan and the Caspian Sea.

The war was not over, there were daily severe engagements, but the Volunteers had won recognition as the hope of Russia. They had a growing number of troops, they had communication with the markets of the world, they had diplomatic representatives at foreign capitals. The year of formation was passed, from November 1917, when the quiet man in spectacles descended from the train at Novocherkassk, to November 1918, when 125,000 men were pressing along a front of 300 miles.

Nor was the spirit of the troops less resolute than in the early days. General Denikin asked one of his officers, who had taken part in forty-seven actions, 'How many cartridges have you used during the year?' 'Seven' was the reply. Those who have been under fire will know the self-control a man must have, the mastery of his will, to be able to pass through attack and retreat, advancing into the muzzles of rifles, or retiring from their fire, without being able to discharge a shot in return.

On September 25, General Alexiev died, his death being the direct result of exposure and overwork. To the last, his acute mind was concerned with the affairs of his army. A favourite of the former Czar and a member of the old aristocracy, he was a Russian to the last drop of his blood, and he lived, moved, and had

his being in Russia's prosperity. He was, in himself, a link between the old and the new orders. He was intelligent, painstaking, and unswerving in his policy that the Volunteers should make no alliance with any who opposed a united and independent Russia. He did not live to hear the news of the success of the Allies, as the collapse of Bulgaria occurred the day following his death. Romanoffsky was promoted to be Denikin's chief-of-staff, and General Dragomirov (and later, General Lukomsky) was President of the Council which was formed to handle the questions of civilian government in the territory which should be taken by the Volunteers. A ministry was initiated, which, as its title indicates, was of a temporary nature, to exist only until order should have been restored to such an extent of territory that General Denikin, pursuant to his commitment, would be justified in calling a constitutional convention which might represent all Russia.

Here ends the tale of the Ragged Noblemen, and their great chiefs. What followed, in their sweeping successes, in their disastrous collapse, is another story, the telling of which is not yet.

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BOOK - NOTES

One result of the war has been the interruption of the progress of the famous LIFE OF BENJAMIN DISRAELI, but the final two volumes may be expected this month. Begun by Mr. W. F. Monypenny, who died while engaged in the third volume, the work was taken up by Mr. G. E. Buckle, a former editor of *The Times*, who has carried it to a most successful conclusion. The delay in publication has had one unexpected and most fortunate result, as it has enabled Mr. Buckle to get access to a large and singularly interesting budget of private correspondence of the highest value in respect of Lord Beaconsfield's later years. In an appendix will be printed several chapters of an unfinished novel on which Lord Beaconsfield was engaged at the time of his death, dealing with the rise and political development of a young statesman in whom readers will discern a portrait of one of the most famous political celebrities of the last century.

Dr. Gore has written an exposition of THE EPISTLES OF ST. JOHN (6*s*. net) on similar lines to his well-known volumes on THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, THE EPHESIANS, and THE ROMANS. In the course of his Preface Dr. Gore says: "It is obvious that the Epistle has a very distinct bearing on the present-day controversies—especially on the tendencies commonly called 'Modernist' and on the social application of Christianity and the function of the Church in society. I have from time to time indicated such applications, but I have resisted the temptation to write at any length upon them, because I came to the conclusion that I had better confine myself strictly to the function of expositions properly so called. But I may say that I believe nothing can be more important for our modern world than that we should believe St. John's principles, theological and ethical, with all our hearts, and set ourselves to apply them with all our will."

The meaning and origin of the familiar signs or badges worn on their shoulders by soldiers has been a puzzle to many. These signs were introduced in 1915, when it was realised that the enemy was gleaning useful information from the number of divisions borne on transport wagons and the like. As a means of baffling the Bosch, every unit, from the Division upwards, was given a distinctive sign, many of them expressing remarkable ingenuity and originality. The whole of the signs borne by British armies, army corps, and divisions during the Great War have been collected, described, and illustrated by Captain V. Wheeler-Holohan, 12th London Regiment, in DIVISIONAL AND OTHER SIGNS (5*s*. net), which will be published this month. There are curious and humorous stories attached to many of these signs which make interesting reading, and, as Captain Wheeler-Holohan has been assisted by the Divisonal Commanders, the book is as authentic as it is comprehensive and attractive.

Among the literary reputations won during the War, that of Dr. Robert W. Mackenna stands out, and not for having written a war-book. This is unusual; yet it appears less so when the character of Dr. Mackenna's works is realised; for they deal with the eternal themes, their interest was not closed when Armageddon ended, and their purpose is expressed with a style worthy of the quality. THE ADVENTURE OF DEATH (6s. net), THE ADVENTURE OF LIFE (6s. net), and THROUGH A TENT DOOR (8s. net) have been several times reprinted, and have surely won an abiding place on the shelves of book-lovers.

Professor Henri Cordier, of the Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes, Paris, and Editor of Sir Henry Yule's translation of THE BOOK OF SER MARCO POLO, has prepared a supplementary volume of notes and addenda to that great work. In it is embodied much fresh and important information obtained as the result of voyages undertaken by travellers like Sir Aurel Stein, Sven Hedin, Pelliot, Kozlov and others, and also material collected by the editor from new works and from old books which had been neglected. It will prove indispensable to all who possess Sir Henry Yule's edition of MARCO POLO—and to the many who have yet to possess the immortal volumes.

A most useful and timely contribution to the question of the nationalisation of railways in this country is provided in an HISTORICAL SKETCH OF STATE RAILWAY OWNERSHIP (3s. 6d. net), by W. M. Acworth. It compares the efficiency of public and private management in various countries, and shows that in democratic States political influences have always interfered with business management. The possibility of management, not by the people, but for the people under some scheme such as has been put forward by Mr. Justice Sankey for the coal mines, is suggested by the author, whose many years of close study of railway development give the warrant of authority to whatever he writes on the subject.

"Frederick Palmer," said Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, "has seen more war than any other living American writer." Mr. Palmer was chosen as the representative with the British Army in France of the whole American press; he was the only correspondent permitted to visit the Grand Fleet; and from May 1917 was colonel on the Staff of General Pershing. He is well known in this country through several most successful books, and he now adds to the list OUR GREATEST BATTLE (12s. net), describing the whole of the great Battle of the Meuse-Argonne, in which 650,000 Americans were engaged. Mr. Palmer's previous books include MY YEAR OF THE WAR, WITH THE NEW ARMY ON THE SOMME, and AMERICA IN FRANCE (7s. 6d. net each).

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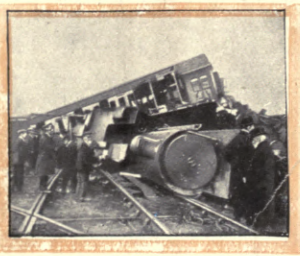

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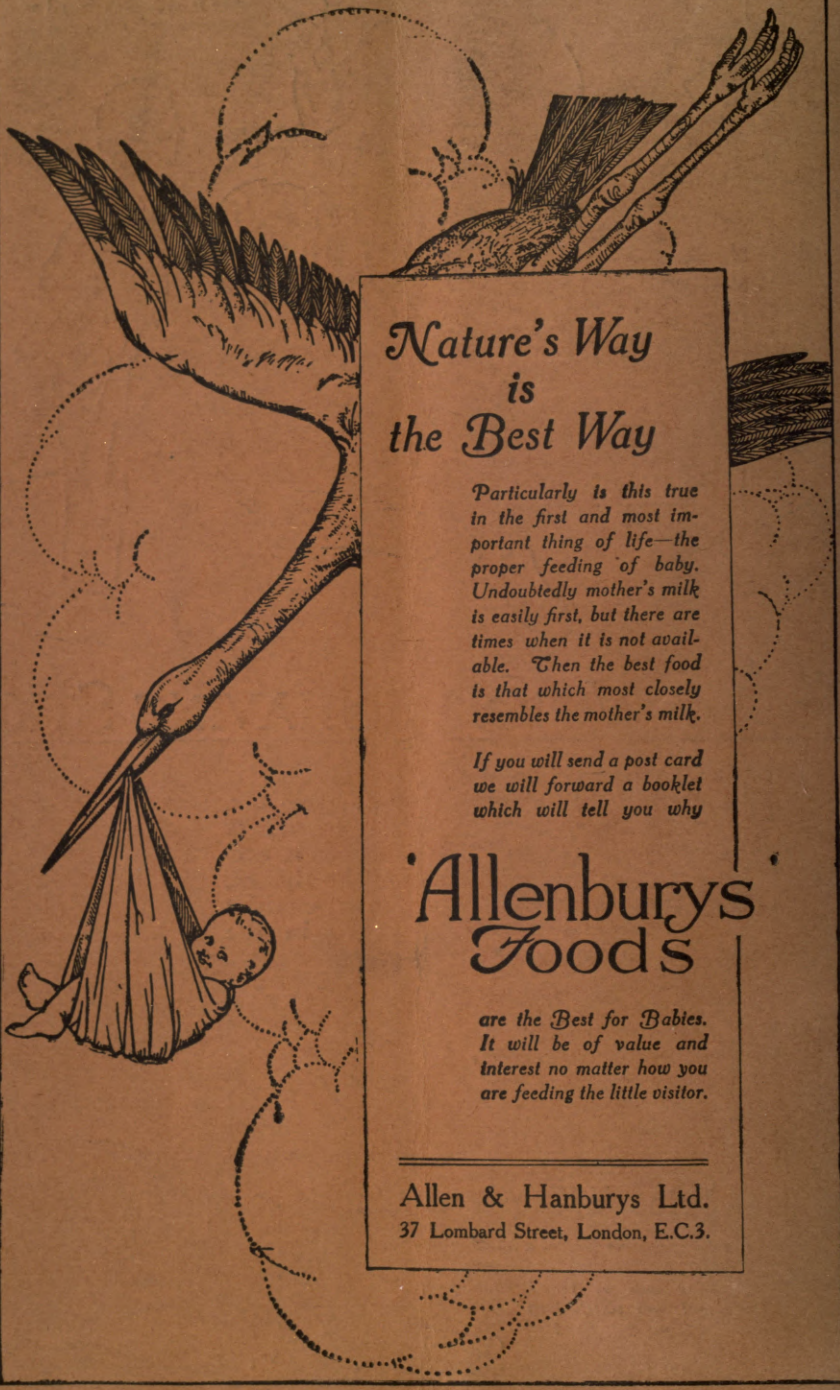

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